

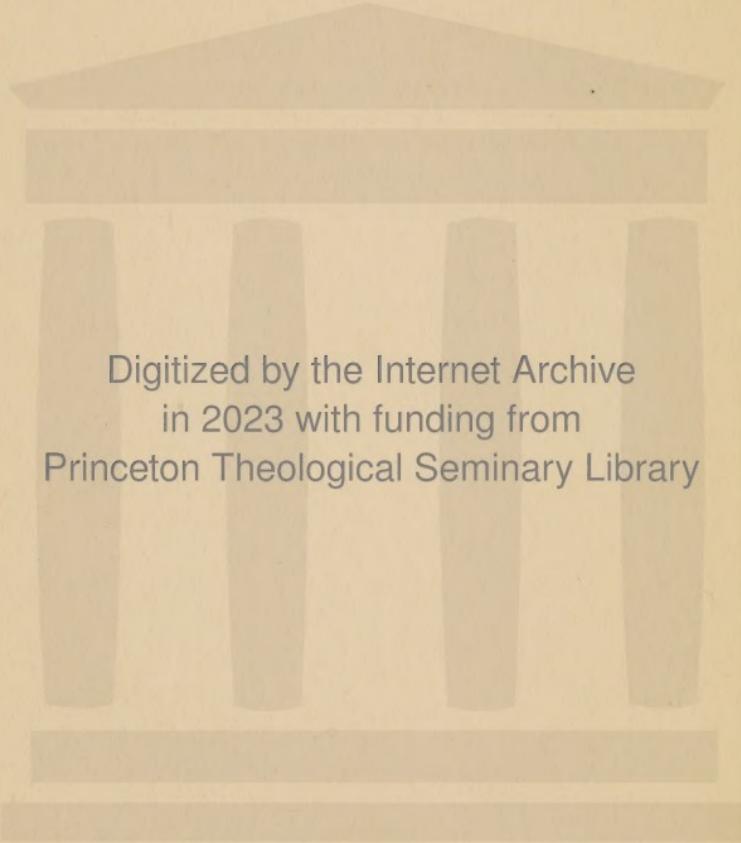
BX 8 .V36

Van Kirk, Walter W. 1891-
1956.

Youth and Christian unity

YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

WALTER W. VAN KIRK



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

<https://archive.org/details/youthchristianun00vank>

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
APR 20 1927
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

BY
WALTER W. VAN KIRK

ASSOCIATE SECRETARY, COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL
JUSTICE AND GOODWILL, FEDERAL COUNCIL OF
THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA



NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

Copyright, 1927
BY GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN UNITY
— D —
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO
GLADDYS

“Quod tuum’st meum’st; omne meum est autem tuum.”

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. Christian Unity—The Ideal of Youth for the Church	11
2. Christian Unity—A Practical Necessity.....	32
3. Christian Unity—Conditions Determining Youth's Viewpoint	61
4. The Present Day Interchurch Approach to Young People	93
5. Christian Unity—In the United States	113
6. Christian Unity—In the United States (Continued)	145
7. Christian Unity—In Other Countries	170
8. Christian Unity—World Movements.....	196
9. Christian Unity—Youth's Opportunity.....	223
10. Conclusion	262

YOUTH AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

Chapter I

CHRISTIAN UNITY—THE IDEAL OF YOUTH FOR THE CHURCH.

Youth is helping to build a new Church, a united Church, a Christendom at peace with itself. After centuries of grievous divisions the Churches of the world are being brought together in the spirit and fellowship of unity. The emphasis on denominationalism is passing. The number of those who are willing to defend the present day divisions within the Church is constantly diminishing. Wide differences of opinion prevail as to the most effective means of healing these divisions, but that they should be healed there does not seem to be the slightest doubt.

This ideal of a united Church has challenged the imagination of youth. The younger churchmen of today have set their faces toward the dawn of a new era in the history of organized Christianity. Division is slowly but inevitably yielding to unity. The prayer of the first and foremost Christian will yet be answered. When the question is raised as to why youth should be particularly interested in this problem of Chris-

tian unity the answer is immediately forthcoming that the man who on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane first prayed for the unity of the Church was a young man. That must never be forgotten. Jesus was not old enough to be practical. He was quite too young to be familiar with the things that couldn't be done. It was in the audacious faith of His early thirties that Jesus prayed for the religious unity of His followers. Other young men are now following in the footsteps of their youthful Master. They too are praying for the Oneness of the Church of God. And they are determined not only to pray for Christian unity but to labor for its achievement.

This widespread interest in Christian unity is part and parcel of a new philosophy of life that has lately gripped the soul of the world. Disillusioned by the war, men are now seeking reality. We are witnessing at the present time the most significant intellectual awakening of the past five hundred years. Youth is sharing and in many places leading in this quest for truth. Politics has already begun to yield to this influence. Intelligent young men are not as orthodox, politically, as their fathers were. They are not branded with the party labels of yesterday. They are independent in their political thinking. They refuse to be herded into

servility by "ward bosses." Their look into the future is not gauged by their perspective of the past. This larger view of things has been carried over into the general field of race relations. Youth doesn't regard the riddle of race as insoluble. There never was a time when racial bigotry was so manifestly out of date. This is said despite the periodic revival of such organizations as the Ku Klux Klan. It may be said here that there are very few Klan organizers on our college campuses. Youth is gloriously unafraid of the widely advertised "rising tide of color." Youth is primarily concerned with the rising tide of human brotherhood. Youth is committed to the essential oneness of humanity and the fundamental social and spiritual equality of the races.

The more thoughtful among our youth have, moreover, responded to the ideal of an international fellowship. Youth refuses to burn incense before the gods of national selfishness. Without sacrificing for a moment his devotion to his native land youth looks afar and sees in the need of other people an opportunity for the functioning of a Christian patriotism. Increasingly it is becoming true that the young men and women of today are citizens of the world.

Having once disassociated themselves from these political, racial and national prejudices, it

is only natural, indeed inevitable, that these same young people should look with a certain measure of divine impatience upon those theological and religious prejudices that are responsible for the continued divisions within the Church of Christ. Their interest in Church union is a logical by-product of a mental process that is gravitating away from division and in the direction of unity. This passion for racial, political and religious unity represents youth's objective in the modern crusade for a better world order. Their concern in and for a united Christendom is woven into the fabric of their whole philosophy of life. To them Church union is something more than a mere item of passing interest. To many thousands of the present generation of young people the unification of Christendom has become nothing less than a life purpose, a summons that must and shall be obeyed.

It might be well to clarify at this point just what we mean by the term "Christian unity." The followers of Jesus Christ have yet to come to a mutual understanding of the meaning of unity. To some it means a federating of Christian forces for the carrying on of a common program of religious activity. Unity from this viewpoint is a spiritual something, the benefits of which can be made available to the Church at

large without the surrendering of denominational titles. To others Christian unity means the organic union of two or more communions with the absolute and final obliteration of denominational distinctions. Both the cooperative and the organic union phases of Christian unity will be referred to in these pages. The federation phase of Christian unity is very well illustrated in America through the functioning of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. The organic union phase of this movement has been dramatically brought to the attention of the world through the merging of the Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist bodies in Canada into a single, united Church. We shall trace the progress of these two aspects of Christian unity in America and throughout the world, being careful to specify in each instance just what it is that we are discussing. The Christian youth of today are primarily interested in the church federation adventure. When they speak of Christian unity it is generally the cooperative work of the Churches to which reference is made. Not a few of our youth, however, view federation only as a step in that process through which the Holy Spirit will make of these mutually divergent communions one living organism.

We see here one of the most gratifying re-

sults of that inquiry process that insists upon examining the Church in the light of modern conditions. There is not the slightest disposition among the more far seeing of these young people to discount the past, nor to belittle the service rendered by those intrepid souls who in their devotion to the Church felt called upon to further divide its ranks. There may have been sufficient reason for the inception of every one of the scores of denominations that now lift their spires skyward. Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley, George Fox and all the rest are respected for their opinions and admired for their efforts. Their places are secure. The contributions which they made to the building of the Church triumphant are gratefully recognized. But these men, prophetic though they were, did not live in our world. Their problems were not our problems. They spoke to their day and generation, but the ear of the present listens for a voice that speaks the language of today. We keep faith with the dead not by perpetuating what the dead have done but by courageously doing what the dead would do were they among the living. Motivated therefore by the same earnest desire to know the will of God for His Church that burned in the breast of the heroes of yesterday, the young people of today are determined to

examine the Church afresh, and with the courage so abundantly exemplified by their fathers, make whatever changes or adjustments within the Church that appear to be necessary to meet the needs of the present hour. Youth cannot but recognize that most of the conditions that originally made necessary these divisions within the Church have ceased to exist. There is therefore no justification for their continuance. Youth's interest in Christian unity does not inhere in their failure to appreciate the past. Our young people aspire to Christian unity not because they love the denominations less but because they love their common Christ more.

In building this Church of tomorrow these young people take a long look into the past. They do not stop with Luther, nor with Huss, nor with Arnold of Brescia, nor with Saint Francis, nor with Augustine, nor with Athanasius. They are not satisfied to linger within the shadow of the brilliant age that produced such men as Cyprian, Tertullian, Origen and Polycarp. Our young people in their devotion to the Church insist upon going back to Jesus Himself. Their theology, their attitude toward life, their impatience with the "status quo," are rooted to what they believe to be the fundamental purpose of Jesus for His Church. He is their divine pattern. They appeal from the

decisions made by the Church fathers and the theologians to the authority of Jesus. Always the questions are, "What would Jesus say?" "What would He do?"

Looking about them these young people see on every hand the evidences of man-made divisions within the Church, the body of Christ. On this corner may be found the Church of a certain denomination. Across the street there is a Church of another faith. Down the avenue there is yet another gospel preached from the pulpit of another sect. In the last analysis it is the same gospel that is being preached from these various pulpits but the strength of the message is vitiated because of these seeming divisions. In other words we are maintaining outward forms of a division which in fact does not exist. Out of the chaos of this unhappy situation there emerges the solemn inquiry, "Are these divisions included within Christ's purpose for His Church?" "Is it His will that all these various sects shall compete for the homage of the faithful?" "Is the Christ who prayed for the unity of the Church satisfied with the present situation?" Youth cannot believe that He is.

We shall have occasion, later, to make more explicit youth's conviction in this matter. It will serve our present purpose briefly to refer

to the Inquiry on "Youth and the Christian Way of Life in a Changing World," that was initiated by the World's Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, in preparation for the 1926 Helsingfors Conference. A carefully prepared questionnaire was sent out to youth groups all over the world. These inquiries covered a wide range of subjects—home, school, church, relation of the sexes, patriotism, race and world brotherhood. We are interested particularly in knowing what these young people had to say about the Church. It is to be remembered that these opinions are those of Christian youth, not those hostile toward religion, nor unfriendly toward the Church. Their estimate of organized religion must, for that reason, be thought of as at least honest, if not wholly adequate.

The following is from the Scottish report: "Our Lord lived and died a young man in the days of His flesh, and one pictures most, if not all of His disciples as also possessing the physical strength and spiritual ardour, the enthusiasm and loyalty of youth. Religion had grown frigid and rigid, cautious and conventional, before Jesus made it young again. It might, therefore, be imagined that the Church He founded would make an instant and generous appeal to the young men. If it no longer

does, it is at least legitimate to infer that it has grown old, or if not old, at least middle aged, unimaginative and cautious, an ambulance and a baggage train, rather than a fighting army of God. Some such feeling undoubtedly underlies the attitude of many young people today." And again from this same youth group: "No doubt our denominational differences have done much to produce this weakening of the Church's power, and united testimony of her Master."

We no sooner recover from this rather frank criticism of religion and the Church, than we are brought face to face with what many of the young people of England, Ireland and Wales are saying. Here are some of the indictments made against organized religion by these youthful followers of Jesus: "There are too many denominations and too much antagonism. A united Church is needed." "Churches are suffering from centuries of accumulated tradition —they must get back to the real Jesus." "The Churches fail to attract men outside their ranks —men will not come in on the terms laid down by the Churches, which are not open to opinion outside their creeds. The beauty of faith has degenerated into a tiresome and stale formula. They do not grasp the truth that 'where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty.'" "Organized

religion needs to be thoroughly overhauled. It does not appeal to the younger generation—services are too dull, prayers too stereotyped and monotonously spoken, hymns are not suitable, and sermons are below the intellectual standard needed today.” “Organized religion is a force of great potentiality handicapped by lack of adventurous leadership, and hindered by a heritage of dogmatic traditionalism which hesitates to express itself in terms of modern life.” “Its complacency, bigotry, and wranglings fill us with disgust; it contributes nothing towards the world’s welfare.”

From Uruguay comes this criticism: “The young people are dissatisfied with certain exaggerations and with a too conservative or dogmatic attitude which does not consider the spiritual tendencies of the rising generation.” Similar testimonials have fallen from the lips of youth groups in many other countries. It will be seen that the young people whose voice has been made articulate in the Helsingfors Conference are quite outspoken in their condemnation of sectarian divisions. We are quite ready to charge at least a fraction of this criticism to the untutored exuberance of youth. But there yet remains a sufficient body of intelligently informed opinion so adverse to denominationalism as to make necessary some pretty

clear thinking on the part of the adult leadership of the Church of the present day.

Convinced that this sectarianism does not represent the mind of Christ, it follows, as far as these young people are concerned, that these divisions must inevitably yield to the purpose of Him who bequeathed to us our common faith.

That is the program of youth for the Church of the future. Surely there can be no objection if the loyalty of youth to Christ supersedes their loyalty to the particular denomination with which they have been associated by the accident of birth! Rather, there is every reason why age should ally itself with youth in the consummation of that purpose for which Christ both lived and died. It is this matchless devotion to Christ that makes youth impatient with creedal disputes and intolerant of denominational divisions. As against the theological metaphysics of the fourth century the youth of today prefer the simple gospel story of the first century Christians. These young people are frankly sceptical of any theology or any metaphysics that makes for disunion. To their thinking the continued preservation of our denominational distinctions rests upon the fundamental premise that the theologians and the metaphysicians have discovered formulas of belief and conduct that were not implicit within

the teachings of Jesus. Youth rejects that premise and having rejected the premise they see the whole denominational superstructure falling to the ground. Youth's interest in a united Christendom springs out of the inescapable logic of first century Christianity that loyalty to Jesus may be accomplished without dividing the ranks of the loyal. Youth believes that as we draw nearer to Christ we draw nearer to one another, individually, collectively, and institutionally, and that when our purpose is one with Him we shall have achieved peace within the Church, divisions will have disappeared, and unity will have been accomplished.

But let us not assume that this impatience with dogmatism and sectarianism is to be construed as hostility toward the Church as such. We will refer again to the report of the Helsingfors Inquiry Commission for a vindication of this statement if it is felt that confirmatory evidence is necessary. The same young people who criticized the Church for its denominational rivalries, also had this to say: "The Churches are doing good and useful work." "The Churches are making a definite attempt to meet changed conditions, and are helpful in the lives of men." "Churches are a necessity, vital to the life of normal Christians. Churches, however, often get into ruts and need vitalizing;

but to say there are faults is only to say that men are human." "Organized religion has a place to fill in this age, functions to perform. Although the Churches may be imperfect, the Christian religion could not be a live thing without them. Nothing better has yet been found to replace them." "There is little real difference between any of the Churches. Why not have all the young men of the same age come together and be taught by a person whose speciality would be to reach young people?"

No, the more constructively minded of these young people are loyal to the Church notwithstanding numerous statements to the contrary. They are critical to be sure. For that we should be profoundly grateful. The Church would very soon pass out of the life of the world were it not for the helpful criticism of each successive generation. The Church is a living organism. It is not static. Endowed with this capacity for growth and development it should ever welcome the eagerness of youth to change and amend. Therein lies the guarantee of progress. The Church will forfeit its right to continue if it ever assumes that as an organization it has evolved into a state of chronic perfection. Persuaded by the logic of this conviction youth ventures to believe that the Church of tomorrow will more nearly represent the mind of Christ

than the Church of today. Being still further convinced that the present day divisions within the Church do not represent the mind of Christ youth has dedicated itself to the task of building a Church that will keep faith with Christ by living at peace with itself.

Interpreted upon the background of this noble purpose it will be seen that this criticism of the Church on the part of these young people is of the highest order. It is not Pharisaic. Neither is it born of bigotry. Nor is it small minded nor meticulous. Youth recognizes that no other institution can take the place of the Church. It is just because they see in the Church the spiritual leaven of human society that they want to release its influence from all that divides and dissipates. Such a purpose is wholly constructive. It tears down in order that it may build up. We are convinced that this so-called hostility of youth to the Church is pure fabrication.

At the peril of being charged with inconsistency we will admit that many thousands of our young people never give the Church a serious thought. In that respect they are not unlike their fathers. At no time has it ever been true that youth as a whole has been for or against any given cause. There are today many irreligious youth who seem incapable of lifting them-

selves above the level of jazz conduct or of jungle ethics. That is to be deplored but it is true. It is also true that hosts of young people are determined as never before that Jesus' way of life shall be incorporated into the life of men and of nations. The Church is the direct beneficiary of that noble purpose. There is today more genuine interest in conferences of religion, in institutes of religious fellowship and in courses of study touching upon religious themes than ever before in the history of the Church. Never before have students been so insistent upon the complete Christianization of our industrial, racial and international life. Seldom if ever has youth shown such an earnest desire to share in the program of the Church. It simply is not true that youth has thrown the Church overboard. On the contrary the Church is looked upon as the one remaining hope for the salvaging of civilization.

When, therefore, we speak of youth and their interest in Christian unity we do not mean to infer that young people everywhere are concerning themselves seriously with this issue. Nor do we mean that the present generation of youth is rallying in mass formation to the defense of the Church and for the espousal of Christian principles. What we do mean is that when young people think about the Church in

its organized relationships it is generally with regard to some form of interdenominational activity. Indeed the youth of which we speak may be in the minority, but it is a very persistent, aggressive and articulate minority. And what is more, it is a growing minority. Among these young people are to be found those who will inevitably emerge into places of leadership and responsibility in years to come. What these young people think is for that reason of great significance to the Church. The term "youth" as made use of in this volume has reference to those more prophetic groups of our young people who have purposed in their hearts to remain faithful to the Church and loyal to its mandates.

But it must be a united Church. Youth's loyalty to the Church is not measured by the yardstick of denominational prestige but by the advances that have been and are being made to enthrone Christ in the life of the world. Youth believes that only a united Church will be sufficient for the task of bringing God's kingdom down from the skies. Put to the pragmatic test they see denominationalism condemned. And youth is pragmatic. Youth wants a Church that will refuse to surrender when challenged by the forces of evil. These young people want a Church whose denominational constituents

are Christian enough to decrease that Christ might increase. They see but little hope for the future of the human race unless organized Christianity is able to add to its strength through the consummation of religious unity.

What will be the answer of the Church's adult statesmen to youth's demand for the unification of Christendom? Not a few of these older folks have already climbed up into the seat of the scornful. They regard the aspirations of youth in this respect as utter nonsense, as impossible vagaries. Others who have grown old only to see their own youthful dreams unrealized have added cynicism to their scorn. Still others who are honestly opposed to the principle of Christian unity cannot but discourage those who would tear down our denominational line fences. Their opinion must be respected, and is. Among those who hold this view are many whose lives have been epics of sacrifice. They have served their denominations nobly and in thus serving they have come to love and revere the Church of their choice. It would be surprising if they were able to dissolve the denominational ties of a life-time without certain doubts and misgivings. Young people do not propose thoughtlessly to disregard this point of view. They are not without patience for a denominational consciousness that

has been quickened by an unstinted devotion to the things of God. But they do lack patience for that peculiar type of denominational prejudice that is born of bigotry and that is nurtured by the scorn heaped upon the devotees of another faith.

It will become increasingly evident that a majority of the present day leaders of the Church will be found working in sympathetic cooperation with their younger comrades. Not a few of these denominational spokesmen have been pioneering in the field of Christian unity for many years. They see in youth's clear call for a closer fellowship among the Churches an indication that their labor has not been in vain. There will be in many instances a joining of hand and heart between youth and age upon this most important issue.

It has been said that youth is pragmatic. It is. But it is more than that. Like Galahad of old these young people of whom we speak have seen a vision, and they mean to pursue it. It is the vision of a united Church, a Church whose creed is the Cross and whose Saviour is Jesus Christ the Lord. Theirs is a divine mandate and obey they must. They are resolved to put an end to the shame of a divided Church. They are determined that Christ's body shall no longer be rent asunder. Youth sees on the one

hand a denominationalism whose glory is fading; a religion that is burdened with the excesses of bigotry and weighed down by the mill-stones of man made encumbrances; a faith that is vitiated by hundreds of isms and invalidated by all sorts of claims to infallibility; a discipleship that competes against itself; a program for world redemption that divides the human race into creedal segments; a Church so broken and so divided that the world mocks at its claim to be the voice of the living God. Youth sees on the other hand the ideal Church, the Church for which Christ prayed, the Church for which He lived, labored and loved; a Church that is truly catholic and whose doors are open to receive every seeker of the divine; a Church whose gospel of reconciliation has brought peace within as well as without; a Church so devoted to the exaltation of Christ that denominational differences are dwarfed into insignificance and age long barriers of religious prejudice are burned away; a Church that has achieved Christian unity and that in so doing has become the Church militant and the Church triumphant.

Such is the vision of youth for the Church of Christ. Having set their hands to the plow there will be no turning back. They will never yield to the tempter's voice that it is easier to

submit than it is to conquer. Theirs is the mind and the heart of the crusader. There can be and will be no surrender. How then can there be defeat? There will be disappointments, to be sure, and discouragements. It may be that these young people will go to their graves with the promised land of their labors yet in the distance. But they will die with faith enough to believe that their children and their children's children will worship God at the altars of a united Church. There is no power on earth, no matter how strong or how deeply entrenched, that is able to prevail against such a lofty purpose, against such an eternal hope. Youth has dreamed and the Church will never be the same. Youth has lighted the candles of God in the temples of the world. In this divine glow men will be shown the way to Him who is the Church's one foundation.

Chapter 2

CHRISTIAN UNITY—A PRACTICAL NECESSITY.

If there is such a thing as “the revolt of youth” it is a revolt against those major evils that threaten to destroy our civilization. These evils are highly organized. Their resources are pooled together and they assail mankind with a maximum of efficiency. Before this massed strength humanity stands appalled, half afraid and half bewildered.

The one force capable of combating these sinister influences is religion, the religion of Jesus Christ. Christianity, with love as a substitute for hate, with sacrifice opposed to selfishness, with infinite truth resisting falsehood and with the right arrayed against the wrong, could, if properly organized, rescue the human race from the menace of these gigantic evils. But alas! The Christian Church is broken into hundreds of fragments and its voice is lost amid the stammering confusions of its own creation. To youth this situation makes the union of Christendom imperative. Youth is not willing to fiddle with non-essentials while the Kingdom of

God is made the tinder for the flames of a boastful paganism. Aroused by the immediacy of the dangers that threaten on every hand our young people demand that the Churches of America and of the world unite. To their thinking such a step is the first essential in the program of social and international redemption.

What are some of these evils against which the Church must unite if civilization is to survive? We will mention but five. The distinction of first place must be given to organized warfare. It was the late Lord Bryce who said, "Either we will end war or war will end us." His judgment is concurred in by statesmen and politicians, by priests and prophets, by educators and reformers, and by every man, woman and child capable of average intelligence. We are confronted, in the second place, with certain racial injustices and inequalities which may prove to be a boomerang of destruction for the whole human family. Yellow versus white, East versus West! What potential antagonisms are hidden within those conflicting spheres of racial influence! Then there is the problem of mass illiteracy. Democracy is placed in continuous jeopardy and peace is a misnomer as long as ignorance stalks unchallenged through the pathways of the world. We have then to consider the multifarious forms of indus-

trial bondage that dwarf human personality for the sake of economic gain. And finally there is the international traffic in women, drugs, intoxicating liquors and other character destroying agencies that must be overcome if our social life is to be made secure and immune from dissolution.

We will now examine the need for Christian unity in the light of the first of those evils to which reference has just been made. A brief look into the past will help us to understand the issues involved. It was August first, nineteen hundred and fourteen. That date will never be forgotten. It is written in scarlet in the histories of the world. It was on that day that the curse of war fell upon the nations. It so happened that on that very day there had assembled in Constance, Germany, more than eighty churchmen who had come together from the ends of the earth to write a new code of international ethics. But their deliberations were cut short by the call to arms. While these churchmen were praying for peace the armies of Europe were mobilizing. The music of marching feet became the requiem for the sepulture of the Church's supplication for a warless world.

It was the first time since Jesus died upon the Cross that His disciples had gathered to-

gether in any significant and representative capacity in an international conference to consider questions of world peace. But it was too late as far as that particular conflict was concerned. The churchmen who had come to Constance with such high hopes were soon on their way home again, their dreams for peace shattered and their prayers for the elimination of strife between nations apparently unanswered. These departing churchmen were met everywhere by the declaration that Christianity had failed. As a matter of fact it was not Christianity, but the Churches that had failed. In the chaos that comes from disunion the Churches were powerless to sheathe the sword of the god of war. The Churches submitted to the plundering of civilization by the ruthless hand of a drunken militarism and the followers of Christ were held in derision. There was born however, in the travail of that never to be forgotten tragedy, a new hope, the hope that in Christian unity there might yet be found a way to insure the blessings of peace to the war weary nations of the world. Through the organization of the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches there was provided a way for the nurturing of that spirit of religious unity that had been so notably lacking in pre-war days.

The Great War is over. The guns that belched forth their fire of death during those fateful days are covered with rust. But new and more powerful guns are being made by the masters of military technique. New and deadlier gases are being prepared in the chemical laboratories of the world. Expenditures for military purposes are everywhere on the increase. It seems to be quite generally forgotten why the war to end war was fought. In the meantime, what is being done in the name of Christianity, to save humanity from again experiencing the agonies of those war years?

It is pertinent at this point to recall the language of the King's Message to the National Council of the Evangelical Free Churches: "The King feels it to be preeminently the duty of the Churches at the present time to declare their faith that the only warfare worth waging is against those evils which throughout history brought upon the nations the horror of war." It was Marshal Haig who said, in speaking to his countrymen, "The gospel of Christ is the world's only social hope and the sole promise of world peace. It is a crusade to which I urge you, a crusade not having for its object the redemption of a single city, however holy, but the freeing of the whole world from the devastating scourge of war." We have the testimony of

our own General Tasker H. Bliss that "if another war like the last one should come, they (the Churches) will be responsible for every drop of blood that will be shed and for every dollar wastefully expended."

Such is the ideal to which the Church is being summoned by the kings and prophets of our day. What will our answer be? Youth believes that war is the very antithesis of Jesus' way of life. Youth believes, moreover, that the repudiation of the whole war system by the Churches of the world is an inescapable duty that cannot be sidetracked by any amount of ingenious sophistry. One of the legacies bequeathed to the Church as an aftermath of the war was the belief that only in unity could the Churches ever expect to relegate war into the limbo of a discarded past. If world peace could be attained through the accomplishment of Christian unity it would be worth whatever price it would cost in the subordination and possible extinction of denominational cleavages. Youth has faith enough to believe that the Churches will be able to heal the diseases that now afflict the nations when once they have demonstrated their willingness and their ability to heal their own diseases.

While statesmen and diplomats are laying the foundations of international judiciaries and as-

semblies for the preservation of peace, the Church, unhindered by division, must be creating and maintaining among the nations the spirit of goodwill through which such agencies may be made effective. Notable progress has been achieved in late years in this direction. We shall have occasion in subsequent chapters briefly to record the manner in which the Churches have already achieved a sense of unity through their cooperative action in offering resistance to the forces of conflict and in fostering in the mind of men everywhere the will-to-peace.

The problem of race is hardly less grave than the problem of war. Here again it is not too much to say that there will be no peace between the races until there is peace between the Churches. To merely suggest the issue is to authenticate the thesis that only in Christian unity will this problem be solved. We have, on the one hand, the claim of the white race—a claim of cultural superiority and of perpetual dominion. This claim rests down upon the assumption that God has destined this particular race to inherit the earth. We have, on the other hand, the revolt of the colored races against the white man's claim. The result is an ugly situation full of tragic possibilities. These colored people, once held as if by magic in the

web spun by Occidental genius, no longer regard Westerners as invincible. These proud possessors of our A.B. degrees have seen the weak points of their white contemporaries and they are making the most of this newly acquired knowledge. The war developed within them aspirations for a larger spiritual and political life. They want autonomy and independence. They will fight if need be to attain these ends. They are growing daily more restless under the continued exploitation of their Western "superiors." They protest against the discrimination to which they are continually obliged to submit. There are many varieties of this exploitation—economic, commercial, cultural, professional and political. Especially do Orientals object to being excluded from Western countries while Westerners claim for themselves the unquestioned right of entering the territory of the Eastern nations, not only with the intention of seeking a dwelling place but for the inexcusable purpose of reducing to vassalage the natives of the countries to which they come. It would be strange indeed if protests and threats were not forthcoming from those who have borne the ignominy of these racial insults for so many centuries.

We are living in danger of an imminent clash between East and West, between the white and

yellow races. Force can never solve this problem. If a war is ever fought for the settlement of this issue it will result in the extermination of both East and West. Civilization could never survive the strain to which it would be put by such a contest. And yet there are not a few "quack" politicians and "yellow" journalists who are whooping it up for war between America and Japan or between certain other nations of the West against those of the East.

The Church must step into the breach and change the mind set of these racial groups. Who will deny that such a stupendous task calls for the merging of all our denominational interests in the consummation of Christian unity? Our sect mindedness is pitifully incapable of resisting this racial mindedness that is dragging mankind to the very edge of social chaos. There must be a coming together of all the moral forces of Christendom for the promotion of brotherhood and understanding among the races.

Fear more than anything else is the germ cause of this racial unrest. And the only power capable of casting out fear is love—the love engendered by the knowledge that we are all children of a common Father. Only a united Church with its gospel of constructive love will be able to dissipate that fear which today is driv-

ing the races of humanity into hostile factions and armed camps. The best proof we have that a divided Church cannot settle this question is that a divided Church hasn't settled it. Is it not time to discontinue these ecclesiastical divisions for the sake of insuring success to the program of the Church for the establishment of a racial brotherhood? The "Light of the World" came out of the East. Is it too much to hope that out of the West there shall now come another light, the light of a torch borne aloft by the hands of millions of faithful disciples who have found in Christ a bond of unity among themselves and a hope for the rest of the world?

The campaign that is now being waged against illiteracy both at home and abroad makes necessary the effectual union of the Churches of the world. The number of illiterates in the United States is equal to the population of New York City. In Latin America there is an army of illiterates that would require many days to pass a given point. Ignorance, more than anything else, is the curse of China. Her political and social ills may justly be attributed to the abysmal poverty of mind from which her people suffer. One fourth of the world's population live in China. Eighty per cent of those four hundred million people are unable to read or write. How, it is asked, can free govern-

ment function under such conditions? Only fifty-nine out of every thousand throughout the vast empire of India are literate. Is it any wonder that despite the optimism of a Tagore there should come out of India a gospel of pessimism and despair. In Africa, too, conditions are just as bad, if not worse.

Savagery and paganism are the twin scavengers of ignorance. Political franchise and social equality are words without meaning to those who are unable to read or write. Caste, injustice, disease and poverty are the by-products of this mental destitution. And is there need for saying that democracy and illiteracy do not stand together? Clearly the Church has a duty here. This is not a task for the educator working alone. But the school cannot welcome the ministry of the Church until the latter is no longer encumbered with denominational divisions. A divided Church, no matter how noble its purpose or how sacrificial its consecration, is impotent to respond in any adequate way to the challenge of this situation. Clear and distinct there comes the call for an educational evangelism that will bring light and life to the millions that now grovel in darkness. Only in unity will the Church be able to answer this call.

A unifying of Christian forces is necessary for the combating of those industrial injustices

that still abound with such an astounding persistence. Industry must be made to recognize New Testament standards of human values. Questions of wages, profits, hours and conditions of employment must be considered from the standpoint of industrial brotherhood and human personality. Industry everywhere must be democratized. Christian men and women everywhere want to know why it is that capital and labor seem destined for eternal enmity. What is the cause of this industrial cancer that results in lockouts, strikes and sabotage? There are many minor causes tributary to the one major cause which is rank injustice. When we establish justice as the corner-stone principle of our modern industrialism we will have social and civil peace. As long as justice is delayed then peace is both impossible and undesirable. Impossible because peace cannot issue from injustice. Undesirable because peace without justice is an intolerable servitude.

There is no use denying that the workers of the world have been deprived of a just and equitable share of the rapid increase in material prosperity. Even in the United States, where industrial conditions are probably better than anywhere else in the world, it is estimated that two per cent of the people own sixty-five per cent of the wealth. Is anyone so stupid as to

believe that industrial democracy will ever prevail as long as this concentration of wealth in the hands of the favored few continues? Never. If the Church is not capable of protesting against the continued usurpation of the real and personal wealth of the few as against the many then it too has become the instrument of injustice. The Churches of America and elsewhere face a tremendous task in bringing an end to these industrial and economic evils. Youth does not believe that a divided Church will be able to exercise the moral pressure that is needed to bring a pagan industrialism to its knees in repentance. That must be the work of a united Church.

And why must the Church do this thing? For the simple reason that most of our industrial evils, at least in America, have reached the stage where they cannot be remedied by legislation. You cannot require by legislation that a man or an industry shall be governed by the spirit of service. Our industrial difficulties are largely difficulties of spirit, not of law. There must be in our industrial life a shifting of emphasis from profits to service. The law is not able to provide for that transfer of emphasis. That is a matter of spirit. The sin of grinding out personality for profits is not a legislative sin. It is a moral sin. That sin can only be atoned

for by personal and social righteousness, not by additional statutes. A forced cooperation between capital and labor may tend to ameliorate certain difficulties and differences of opinion, but it can never overcome these difficulties nor reconcile these differences. Reconciliation issues from a cooperation prompted by the spirit of service, not that made mandatory by legislation. That is the Church's responsibility. To meet it there must be the strategy of a united effort by a Church that is at peace with itself.

Finally, the traffic in international immoralities cannot be reduced to impotence until attacked by a Church whose conscience is not split up into denominational segments. The widespread transportation of women for illegal purposes, the buying and selling of opium, the smuggling of drugs and the making of "dope," the impoverishment of child life, the internationalizing of the liquor traffic and the propagation of countless other evils that drag humans down to the level of beasts are social sins that can never be uprooted nor destroyed by sectarianism.

War and the growth of the military spirit, racial discrimination, mass illiteracy, industrial and economic bondage and international immorality represent five gigantic evils against which the Church of God must array itself.

Taken together these evils may be thought of as a mailed fist that is slowly strangling the human race. No one division of the Church is able so much as to pry loose the little finger of this mailed fist from the throat of civilization. If war is to be outlawed, if the races are to be brought together into a social compact of fraternity and fellowship, if ignorance is to succumb to intelligence, if human rights are to be placed above property rights, if international sin is to be brought under the dominion of international righteousness, then the Churches of the world will have to forget their minor differences and work together in an heroic attempt to save all that is worth saving in our social and international life.

We will consider next the situation within the Church itself. It is becoming increasingly apparent that only through unity will the Church be able to save itself, to say nothing of saving the rest of the world. We are concerned here with a three-fold circumstance that may prove fatal to organized Christianity. It will avail us nothing to deny the facts or to close our eyes to the alarming conditions that threaten the future of the Church. The writer is not given to pessimism. He believes that the Church will endure, not because it is inherently predestined to continue, but rather because

prophetic men will face the facts and without fear or trembling will make whatever adjustments have been made necessary by the developments of the recent past.

What is this three-fold peril? In the first place spiritual illiteracy is increasing at an alarming rate, making imperative a more adequate system of religious education. In the second place the foreign missionary program of our Church is facing a crisis that can only be met by a speedy and effective coalescing of denominational interests. In the third place the appeal of organized Christianity for unity outside of the Church, racial, political and otherwise, is nullified by the lack of unity within the Church. Because of this fatal inconsistency multitudes are simply ignoring the Church, while others are making it the subject of jest and ridicule. These conditions must and can be remedied. But they cannot be remedied by sectarianism. From within the Church, as well as from without, the call is for unity.

In what other way, it is asked, will the Church be able to offer resistance to the ever growing menace of an education that is divorced from religion? Our educational system has been completely secularized. God has been taken out of the curriculum. It is estimated that there are between thirty and thirty-five mil-

lion children and young people in the United States who are receiving no religious instruction whatever. Whether or not this estimate is correct the number is appallingly large. And all this has been accomplished in the name of religion! The authorities of our public schools, not wishing to give offense to any one of the many adherents of our hundred or more forms of religious belief, have withdrawn the teaching of religion from the class-room. As a consequence our young people are being taught a sociology that is only indirectly concerned with human brotherhood, in a science that frequently leans toward atheism, in a philosophy of realism that ignores the element of an intelligent purpose, in a psychology that is without social passion, in an ethics that sets up moral standards but that is incapable of generating that spiritual initiative which is necessary to translate these standards into conduct.

With what result? We are producing a nation of spiritual illiterates. How can it be otherwise? Here is an educational system that claims to provide a thorough preparation for all the major concerns of human life. And yet no place is reserved for religion. Children and young people growing up under such circumstances cannot help but feel that religion is just a petty non-essential. Deprived of religious in-

struction in their formative years these school children approach the responsibilities of maturity wholly unprepared to meet life's moral emergencies.

Many of these young people who are growing up without the restraints of religious discipline seldom frequent the Church. They are not on speaking terms with God. They care little or nothing for the mysteries of the spirit. They have a mechanistic philosophy of life. They are largely concerned with the comforts of materialism. Their perspective is confined to the horizontal plane of mere things. There is a pretty close connection, too, between a condition of spiritual illiteracy and a tendency toward criminal conduct. A large proportion of the criminals apprehended within recent years have been under twenty years of age. Our jails are being filled with mere grown up boys and girls. This lack of religious instruction has a very vital bearing on the breakdown of our family life. The jazz spirit that influences so harmfully the mind and the morals of the younger generation is but another phase of this spiritual poverty. The vilest and most indecent sex literature imaginable has a circulation reaching into hundreds of thousands and is read by youths who have no apparent desire for anything better.

To be sure not all our young people are contaminated with this germ of irreligion. The affirmation that youth is vitally concerned with the problem of Christian unity is foundationed on the premise that there yet remains a substantial body of young men and women who are spiritually minded and who accept with eagerness and reverence the challenge of the Great Unseen. All the more glory to them. This happy condition obtains not because of our one-sided educational system, but in spite of it.

We are grateful indeed for these more hopeful aspects of the situation. But these other conditions of juvenile delinquency, moral irresponsibility and social depravity tend to prove beyond the peradventure of a doubt that education, standing alone, is notoriously incapable of producing a religious type of character. That has been demonstrated time and time again. Perhaps it has been no more dramatically demonstrated than in the Florentine society of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Social conditions bristled with art and learning. Latin and Greek were held in high esteem. Yet nobles, statesmen and men of letters were corrupt and the vilest paganism was nourished at the breast of culture in the Florence of days gone by. It is axiomatic, that education divorced from religion is powerless to sustain that high spir-

itual endeavor without which civilization will fall upon hardship.

Here in America the responsibility for taking religion out of the public schools has too often been laid at the door of the school. It does not belong there. The responsibility for divorcing religion from education must be placed squarely before the door of the Church. Even before the advent of Roman Catholicism the prejudice of denominationalism was making the problem of religion in the schools lamentably acute. The folks of one Protestant denomination refused to have their children instructed in the religion of another denomination.

One of the foremost educators in America has stated the case in a few very convincing words: "It is because we have held our different religious views and practices in so jealous, divisive, and partisan a fashion that the State has been obliged to withdraw religion from the curriculum and program of its schools." As much as we may dislike to admit it we somehow have the feeling that this is the plain, unvarnished truth. As a church we have signally failed in our duty to provide for those religious sanctions without which the youth of our land are unfairly exposed to the temptations of wrong doing.

What do we propose to do about this matter? If we cannot be held guiltless of aiding in the moral disintegration of our educational process what can we do to correct the situation that has overtaken us? If divisions within the Church worked for the secularization of education then it follows with a logic that is invincible that only in Christian unity will there be found the way for putting God back in our public schools. We quote once more from this same authority: "Can the Churches of America become less sectarian and more religious in their attitude toward the education of their children? If they can, the greater obstacle to a proper recognition of religion by the public schools will be removed. No less urgent than the call to Christian unity that comes from the mission field or the realm of a disordered international life, is the call of the present educational situation in America."

The Churches simply must come together in mutual understanding and without sectarian bias in order that they may put the stamp of the spiritual upon the curriculum of our schools. Until that is done the Church cannot expect educational authorities to take with any seriousness the suggested plans for day schools of religious education. Public school teachers and officers cannot be expected to encourage such a pro-

gram if the children who are dismissed from their class rooms are to be divided in a number of small groups corresponding to the denominational affiliations of the parents involved and sent to the parish houses of their own particular communions. No, if religion is to be brought into wedlock with education it must be on the basis of Christian unity. It was a divided Protestantism that drove the spirit and the content of religion out of our public schools. A united Protestantism will be the means of re-introducing into our class rooms the essentials of a Christian citizenship.

We talk a great deal of the new world order that is to be. But this new world will never come until we have enough new men to make the new world. This brighter future, if it ever comes, will be built, not upon leagues, nor courts, nor political powers, nor diplomatic alliances. It will be built upon moral and spiritual energy, upon character, upon conscience. And how is this moral and spiritual energy to be developed? Chiefly through the establishment of Christian unity and the subsequent revamping of education in the interest of religion. When the Church and the school are able to walk down the avenues of the future hand in hand the children of tomorrow will have both minds and souls with which to solve the complex problems

of modern life. The school and the Church working together and serving together will then be able to make the rough places of our common life smooth and to prepare in the wilderness of our materialistic age a highway for our God.

In Christian unity, too, there will be found the warrant for and the assurance of an unprecedented success in the Church's world service program for the evangelization of the human race. That a crisis exists in our foreign missionary program is frankly admitted. Resentment is spreading among the nationals of China, India, Japan, Korea and elsewhere against the sordid selfishness of Western civilization. These people are beginning to distrust a Christianity that is incapable apparently of Christianizing business, industry and international relations. There is being manifested, likewise, a vigorous hostility toward the denominational cleavages of Occidental Christianity. The National Christian Councils of these various countries have again and again deprecated the sectarian divisions which have been transplanted from the West to the East. This foreign denominationalism is openly condemned by native Church leaders. We are reminded by Daniel J. Fleming, in one of the most significant publications in recent years,

"Whither Bound in Missions," that seventy-four per cent of China's territory has been partitioned into two hundred spheres of denominational influence. Sectarian groups have staked out their claims on the soil of that ancient country and have propagated their particular faith to the confusion of the native Chinese. A similar situation, though perhaps in a less aggravated form, obtains in practically every other area of missionary activity. The exaltation of the denominational viewpoint is particularly objectionable to those natives whose spiritual aspirations find satisfaction in the principle of unity. Their poetry, their philosophy and their religion are rooted through the influences of tradition and environment to the concept of unity. That is why they are so perplexed with a religion that manifests itself in a denominationalism that is the very negation of unity. These natives have absolutely nothing in common with our ecclesiastical and doctrinal divisions. The fundamentalist and modernist controversy means nothing to them. What these people long for is a Christ who will lift them out of centuries of superstition and soul poverty. They ask for a religion that will satisfy their passion for unity and they are given a religion that is split up into hundreds of theological and creedal divisions. Is it any wonder that they

are now in a state of revolt against the denominationalism of the West that has so pitifully divided the soul life of their people? There has developed as a consequence of this condition a sort of divine impatience with sectarianism. Here at home there is a growing conviction that this impatience is warranted and must be constructively and intelligently met.

This does not mean that we have forgotten our divine imperative. We must go on with this evangelizing process for the simple reason that we were commanded so to do by the author of our faith. We believe that in Jesus mankind will find a dynamic and an inspiration for holy living. We believe that the manner of life and the way of living revealed so abundantly in the life of Jesus constitutes a unique appeal to the soul hunger of the world. We must give Jesus to all men everywhere.

To do this effectively we must disassociate Jesus from our ecclesiastical divisiveness and our sectarian spirit and introduce Him to the nations afar quite apart from any implications of denominational expansion. It will be fatal for missions and for Christianity itself when those to whom we carry the gospel story construe our efforts, well meaning though they may be, as an attempt to promote the interests of any particular sect. To prevent such a tragic

ending of our missionary enterprise we must do two things. We must, in the first place, make more manifest the Oneness that we have in Christ, and, in the second place, we must bring the denominationalism of which we are a part into a never ending covenant of unity. Our sectarianism is the price we must pay if the missionary program is to succeed.

The peril of inconsistency is another circumstance that will ultimately bring into Christian unity the various divisions of the Church of Christ. Visualize for a moment the nature of this inconsistency. It is generally conceded that a man may be a thorough going Christian no matter what may be his theological or denominational preferences. As a Christian he is a member of the Church invisible. And yet, enjoying as he does the fellowship of the invisible Church, at peace both with himself and with God, he is not infrequently counted as ineligible for membership and unworthy of the sacraments of the Church that espouses doctrinal standards and administrative practices other than those which may be a part of his own denominational inheritance. A member in good standing of the Church triumphant and yet denied membership in the Church militant! Accepted of God and yet rejected by men! It is that fatal inconsistency that is driving multi-

tudes away from the Church and that is encouraging still others into an attitude of open rebellion against organized Christianity.

Out in the wider areas of the Church's life this inconsistency is even more apparent. There is scarcely a pulpit in Christendom that has not, in late years, summoned the politicians of the world to sit down together in open conference, and, forgetting their differences, unite in a common program for the attainment of world peace. The clergy calls upon these men to renounce their national prejudices and to remould their patriotism in the making of a new and higher brand of society. Failing to do this the Church has heaped scorn upon the professional politician and has reviled the statesmen of the world for permitting their racial and national divisions to stand in the way of consummating the poet's dream for the federation of the world. And yet is it not true, that churchmen have called upon the politicians and the diplomats to do that which they themselves have been all too reluctant to do? If there is need, in this solemn hour—and who will deny that there is?—for political unity, then there is need also for Christian unity. So long as preachers and laymen refuse to accomplish unity in the name of religion they cannot consistently belabour the lawmakers and the politicians for failing to ac-

complish unity in the name of patriotism. A religion that calls upon patriotism to rid itself of all those divisive evils with which that holy passion has in the past been associated, must, in the name of all that is reasonable, divest itself of all those sectarian divisions that have sprung up within recent centuries.

So, too, does the Church pray and preach for racial unity and economic unity, commercial and industrial unity. But all of the elements that stand in the way of unity within these areas of human activity are weighed down by vested interests no less powerful than those which have attached themselves to the Church and which make so difficult the attainment of Christian unity. Preachers cannot consistently condemn politicians, business men and labor leaders for failing to do the thing which they themselves are either unwilling or unable to do. The only way in which the Christian Church will ever escape from the damaging influence of this inconsistency, is to accomplish unity and by that act reduce to silence those who would condemn the Church for preaching a gospel for others that it is not willing to practice itself.

We have referred in this hurried fashion to those conditions within and without the Church that have tended to make the attainment of Christian unity a matter of practical necessity.

The idealism of youth is germane to every one of the influences here set forth, influences that will certainly modify the future of the Church in such a way as to promote unity among Christians and union among the various Churches in which they worship. Youth wants war outlawed. Youth longs for racial equality and human brotherhood. Youth believes that the essentials of democracy should be made manifest in our modern industrialism. Youth would lift the masses up to the level of self respecting intelligence. Youth wants to see the human race made free from the blighting effects of every form of international immorality. Youth believes that the Church and the school should work together in close cooperation for the setting up of an adequate system of religious education. Youth wants the missionary program of the Church to succeed so that Christ shall be made regnant in the life of the world. Youth wants the Church to practice the same virtues of self-sacrifice and self-effacement so prophetically demanded of the State.

Youth believes that in Christian unity all the evils that infest our social life shall be done away, and that the Church itself will thus be enabled to triumph over its foes, and become, in practice as well as in theory, the Body of the Risen Lord.

Chapter 3

CHRISTIAN UNITY—CONDITIONS DETERMINING YOUTH'S VIEWPOINT.

The interest of youth in Christian unity is not the result of any over night process. It is by no means a newly discovered point of view. For many years there have been influences at work on the college campuses, in America and elsewhere, that have modified to a very remarkable degree the thinking of students with regard to the Church. The general tendency of these influences has been for the dwarfing, the doing away with denominational distinctions.

For nearly a half century the Student Departments of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association have been plowing up the soil of student religion and have planted there the seed of a very significant interdenominational fellowship. It would be quite impossible to overestimate the magnificent service rendered to the cause of Christian unity by this Association Movement. That this is true is evident from the four-fold purpose to which the Y. M. C. A.,

for example, has given itself during these many years:

“To lead students to faith in God through Jesus Christ;

“To lead them into membership and service in the Christian Church;

“To promote their growth in Christian faith and character, especially through the study of the Bible and prayer;

“To influence them to devote themselves in united effort with all Christians to making the will of Christ effective in human society, and to extending the Kingdom of God throughout the world.”

Students of many denominations are thus brought together into a common religious life without respect to sectarian loyalties.

Simple devotion to Jesus is the religious slogan of these Student Associations. All lesser loyalties are enfolded within a supreme loyalty for the Galilean founder of the Christian faith. In the application of this splendid loyalty to the tasks of every day there is very little opportunity for the intrusion of the denominational point of view. Denominationalism is not so much denied as it is overlooked. Students gather around the counsel table of the Association and they simply forget that they are Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians or

Episcopalians. They want to make Christ incarnate in the life of the world. They want to make the Galilean an individual to be reckoned with on the college campus. The only way in which that can be done is through a program that transcends all denominational considerations. And this is being done. Every student Y. M. or Y. W. C. A. cabinet meeting is an undergraduate experiment in Christian unity. The Bible classes that are organized under the Association auspices are conducted in anything but a sectarian spirit. There is such a wholesome inclusiveness among these students as they examine and study the word of God, not for the purpose of discovering a proof-text substantiation for some obscure doctrinal position, but for the more worthy purpose of finding God's will for their own lives.

The many practical activities to which the Student Associations give themselves on the campus tend to promote a most welcome sense of spiritual unity. The daring adventures in brotherhood that are sponsored by interracial commissions, and the organizing of cosmopolitan clubs where students of all races meet on a cultural and religious level are but two of the many ways in which students are made to feel their oneness in Christ. These Student Associations have gone a long way in recovering for

the Christian religion its lost sense of unity. Students have been made to see that the divisions that now obtain within the church have but little if any practical relationship to life. They have, through their comradeships on the campus, caught the vision of a united church.

Under the auspices of the Student Christian Movement, there are held each summer a large number of intercollegiate conferences that bring together as many as three to five thousand students from approximately five hundred universities and colleges for an intensive study of the Christian way of life. Eaglesmere, Asilomar, Seabeck, Lake Geneva, Blue Ridge and Silver Bay are names that are lisped with tender reverence by scores of American students. Study, prayer and fellowship are grouped together in the rounding out of a wholesome and well balanced Christian experience. Those who have attended these summer conferences know how much out of place any suggestion of the denominational point of view would be. The intrusion of the sectarian spirit into such an environment would very properly be thought of as sacrilegious.

The beneficial influences of this Association Movement are not confined to America. Through the ministry of the World's Student Christian Federation the entire university,

world is experiencing a silent but none the less vital religious reformation. These Affiliated Movements carry the gospel of the "Church Universal" to Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, Hungary, India, Burma and Ceylon, Italy, Japan, Korea, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippine Islands, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland and numerous other lands without National Organizations.

In many of these countries, even more than in America, the belief is widespread that only in the passing of denominationalism will the Church be able to triumph over itself and the world. Determined as they are to rebuild the world of tomorrow on the foundation of an enduring righteousness, they become increasingly impatient and in many instances actively hostile toward a sectarianism that vitiates the strength of the Church. Through international and interracial discussion conferences, pilgrimages of friendship, and student relief efforts, the young people of university experience the world over are sharing in a totally new and unprecedented attitude toward the Church of Christ that will inevitably minimize the cause of division and magnify the cause of unity.

Included in the 1925 Annual Reports of the World's Student Christian Federation are many testimonials expressive of youth's impatience with the disunion that now prevails within the body of the Church. The report from India, for example, contains the following statement: "Denominational divisions are a real hindrance not only to perfect fellowship within the Christian community, but also to the presentation of a united testimony to those outside. Among students there is an intense longing for complete spiritual fellowship irrespective of denominations." The report from Canada contains the following excerpt from a contributed article in the 'Canadian Student,' "No one needs to be told of the passionate longing for Christianity in face of the bankruptcy of sectarianism and the demand for a united Church, if we are to have a united world and if we are to realize in the highest sense the solidarity of mankind. . . . Into this Church Invisible, mightier than all the Churches, have gone and are going a gallant company of educated youth, alive and aglow under the spell of the Master. They dedicate their lives before its altar, not unaware of its blunders and the bigotries in the past, but because through it they believe the Kingdom of God is coming. Make no mistake! These young men and women are not renouncing com-

fort and ease for some proud denomination. They go forward through the Church into the world of men, with a touch of the heroic, a divine ambitiousness, an exultant sense of opportunity and mission, to live dangerously as Jesus lived—For God and the Holy Catholic Church!" Thus has the leaven of this "student internationale" been at work in the hearts and minds of the future builders of the Church of Christ.

The religious implications of these student pilgrimages should be reemphasized. It is conservatively estimated that between thirty and forty thousand young people from many countries travel to Geneva every summer to enroll in discussion courses on international relations. There is a very definite by-product of religious value in these contacts. Being interested in a common international life these young people cannot help having a sympathetic regard and a tolerant attitude toward those creedal differences that have been a part of their social and religious inheritance. Steamship companies, through their "student tourist" accommodations, have made possible to the present generation of youth wider perspectives and broader sympathies than were ever enjoyed by their forebears. Mingling thus on the sea and in distant places these young people are almost

unconsciously drifting away from the narrower religious conceptions of yesterday.

Under the auspices of the International Confederation of Students a considerable number of undergraduates from the larger colleges and universities of America and other countries are visiting each year the European centers of learning. The Institute of International Relations provides annually for a large number of fellowships and scholarships for American students in foreign countries and foreign students in the United States. The cloistered exclusiveness of our sectarian life cannot long withstand the penetrating influences of this intercollegiate fellowship.

One day, during the late summer of 1926, the S. S. Ryndam lifted her anchor and sailed down the Hudson River, into the Atlantic ocean, on her way around the world. Here was a "floating university" with five hundred students on board and fifty-five faculty members, and the campus over which those students were destined to travel was spread over many seas and many lands. Is any one so stupid as to believe that the Church will be exempt from the modifying influences of these student contacts?

The Student Volunteer Movement has also contributed substantially to the breaking down of these denominational barriers. It was in

1886 that 251 students, from 89 colleges and universities, met in Mt. Hermon, Massachusetts, to bring into effect a daring and adventurous program of world evangelism. For four weeks these students, representing more than a score of denominations, planned and prayed together for the extension of the Kingdom of righteousness. But little thought was given to creeds. They were thinking of something far greater than that. It was not an ecumenical denominationalism to which those students gave themselves with such rare devotion on that historic occasion. Sensing their oneness in Christ these young men and women volunteered themselves with a glad and happy abandon for a ministry of redemption that had for its lofty purpose the reconciliation of the world to God.

From that hour the Student Volunteer Movement, both consciously and unconsciously, has advanced the cause of Christian Unity. Similar Movements have sprung up in Great Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, South Africa, China, Japan and the Near East. It is not too much to say that the World Missionary Conference that met in Edinburgh in 1910 could never have been convened had it not been for this student interest in the Church's program of evangelism. More than eleven thousand stu-

dent volunteers have been accepted by the Foreign Mission Boards of North America for service in foreign fields. All of this recruiting of missionary candidates has been carried on without regard for any of the denominational interests that may have been involved. From six to eight traveling secretaries visit the educational institutions of North America and undergraduates are thereby kept in close touch with this interdenominational program of student evangelism.

The Quadrennial Conventions of the Student Volunteer Movement have brought thousands of students from the United States and Canada into a fellowship of interdenominational understanding. On these occasions students are brought face to face with the problem of Christian unity. They are made to see that the crucial test of Christian living is not assent to a formula but surrender of a life. For the first time perhaps they begin to visualize the possibility of unifying the forces of Christendom for the conquest of the world. Though incidental to its major purpose the Student Volunteer Movement cannot but hasten the day when the Lord's prayer for the unity of His Church shall have been answered. In this world wide fellowship of prayer and service many hundreds of students have achieved a spiritual unity

that is far more real than any denominational division could ever be.

Influencing the student mind in a similar way are certain other organizations more directly representative of the church. There is, to begin with, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. This organization has come to fill a most important place in the religious life of America—indeed, of the world. The Federal Council of Churches dates back to 1908. The Interchurch Conference met in Carnegie Hall, New York, in 1905, and recommended a plan of federation which was adopted by the National Assemblies of the constituent bodies between 1906-08, and ratified by the Federal Council of Churches at its meeting in Philadelphia, December, 1908. Twenty-eight of the larger Protestant evangelical denominations have given their formal assent to the following declaration of purpose as contained in the plan of federation:

“1. To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church.

“2. To bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world.

“3. To encourage devotional fellowship and mutual counsel concerning the spiritual life and religious activities of the churches.

“4. To secure a larger combined influence

for the churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.

"5. To assist in the organization of local branches of the Federal Council to promote its aims in their communities."

It is further declared that "This Federal Council shall have no authority over the constituent bodies adhering to it; but its province shall be limited to the expression of its counsel and the recommending of a course of action in matters of common interest to the churches, local councils, and individual Christians. It has no authority to draw up a common creed or form of government or of worship, or in any way to limit the full autonomy of the Christian bodies adhering to it."

It will be seen that the Federal Council of Churches is not a voluntary fellowship of the communions that make up its membership, but is an officially and ecclesiastically constituted body. Its chief concern is in the realm of practical service. The Federal Council of Churches is not permitted to interfere with the autonomy of the denominations adhering to it. It is not empowered to draw up a common creed, nor in any way to officially declare itself with regard to faith, orders or sacraments. In its ministry of interdenominational service it must be remembered that "Its function is not that of

an overseer and director, but that of an agency for the correlation and the coordination of existing forces and organizations, and, so far as it may be permitted, it is to recommend, give guidance, and point out the way."

But eighteen years have elapsed since the Philadelphia meeting of the Federal Council when the articles of federation were finally ratified. Yet in that relatively short time this organization has pioneered its way to a place of leadership among the religious forces of the world. It has exercised during that time a profound influence on the social life of America. It is just at this point that we are able to relate the work of the Federal Council of Churches to the student life of America, and, indirectly, to the student life of other nations.

The prophetic leadership of the Council with regard to industrial, international and inter-racial relations has won for it the admiration of the young as well as the old. From its inception this organization has preached a gospel of individual and social righteousness, with the result that many students who were formerly hostile toward the Church have been inspired with a new sense of loyalty for the organized forms of the Christian religion.

Youth wants to see the Church tackle the problem of industry. When, therefore, the

Federal Council of Churches adopts a social creed that calls in no uncertain terms for "equal rights and justice for all in all stations of life; the abolition of child labor, the abatement of poverty; the right of employees and employers alike to organize; for a living wage as a minimum in every industry, and for the highest wage that each industry can afford; and for a new emphasis upon the application of Christian principles to the acquisition and use of property, and for the most equitable division of the product of industry that can ultimately be devised," then students become tremendously interested. And when the adoption of this social creed is followed with a successful campaign against the twelve-hour day in the steel industry, it is little wonder that students who are at all interested in the social gospel should look to the Federal Council of Churches as one of the ecclesiastical media through which industry is to be Christianized.

Youth wants to see the Church tackle the problem of war. When, therefore, the Federal Council of Churches adopts a statement of international ideals which declares that "nations no less than individuals are subject to God's immutable moral laws; that nations achieve true welfare, greatness and honor only through just dealing and unselfish service; that

nations that regard themselves as Christian have special international obligations; that the spirit of Christian brotherliness can remove every unjust barrier of trade, color, creed and race; that Christian patriotism demands the practice of goodwill between nations; that international policies should secure equal justice for all races; that all nations should associate themselves permanently for world peace and goodwill," then students are once again made to feel that the international situation is not without hope. Students and young people generally are not slow to give their assent to a creed that expresses the belief of the Churches in international law, in the universal use of international courts of justice and boards of arbitration; in a sweeping reduction of armaments by all nations; and in a warless world.

Youth wants to see the Church tackle the problem of race. When, therefore, the Federal Council of Churches establishes a Commission on the Church and Race Relations, a Commission that sets up and promotes interracial conferences, that marshals the forces of Christianity against the lynching evil, and that wars against all forms of racial discrimination, then students are still more deeply impressed with the significance of this institution for the common religious life of the American people.

Students realize, as do others, that this larger ministry of the Church could never have been made effective had it not been for the spiritual cooperation and partial unity achieved through the functioning of the Federal Council. The knowledge of this fact has contributed mightily to the present day concern of youth for the accomplishment of a united Christendom. It would be beyond the truth to convey the impression that student groups had made an intensive and exhaustive study into the workings of the Federal Council of Churches, and were for that reason more responsive to the call of Christian unity. The Federal Council has never been adequately represented to the student bodies of our American universities and colleges. Whatever knowledge any student group may have of the Federal Council has come about as a result of the sheer worth of its own accomplishments and not as a by-product of any propagandizing effort in its own behalf. All the more remarkable therefore is the present day regard of students and young people for the Federal Council of Churches, a regard that was summed up in the Report of the Student Commission on the Cooperative Work of the Churches of the Evanston Interdenominational Student Conference that met in Evanston, Illinois, during the Christmas holidays of 1925. We quote from

the language of this report: "We commend most heartily the work of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. This organization is indispensable to the religious life of America and to the progress of Christianity, in our own and other lands. Its interests and activities cover the whole range of our religious life, individual, social and international. We would like to see every denomination in America a constituent member of the Federal Council and giving it enthusiastic support."

For some twenty years now the larger Protestant evangelical denominations of America have been developing through the Federal Council of Churches a corporate conscience on the major religious issues of our day and generation. During that time the influence of this movement has penetrated into every stratum of our social and intellectual life, and students, together with others, have come to believe that still greater accomplishments in the quest for Christian unity will eventuate in the future because so much has been accomplished in the past.

The Council of the Church Boards of Education, organized in 1911, has played a conspicuous part in the maturing of youth's concern for a united Church. That students may

not be educated away from the Church this Council is reinterpreting the message of Christianity in a language that is germane to the college campus. A university secretary has as his parish the student bodies of our state, municipal and independent educational institutions above the high schools. The University Committee of the Council is the interdenominational unifying agent of the Churches in the field of Christian education.

Foundations for social and religious work have been established by means of which students are given a more adequate reason for the faith that is within them. Interdenominational student pastorates have been organized. Religious instruction is being made available to an ever increasing number of students under interdenominational auspices. Churches, too, are being built on or near the campus, Churches that preach no particular ism, but rather, Christ. Too much credit cannot be given to the executive officers of these numerous denominational boards of education for their vision and pioneer labor in the field of student evangelism.

In cataloging the organizations that have furthered the cause of Christian unity among young people, reference must be made to the United Society of Christian Endeavor. The first society to bear this name was organized in

1881. The World's Christian Endeavor Union came into being in 1895. In the United States and in practically every other civilized country of the world this interdenominational organization of young people has been bringing the youth of many denominations into a practical Christian fellowship. Friendships have been formed and contacts have been made that have tended to develop a corporate conscience among the young people of the world upon religious and social matters. The creed of the Christian Endeavor movement is loyalty, a loyalty to Christ that is above and beyond any considerations of denominational expediency.

Reference has been made only to the more familiarly known non-denominational and interdenominational organizations that have influenced the mind of youth in the direction of Christian unity. As a result of the influence thereby generated we have, among the more advanced of our young people, a totally new attitude toward the Church and its function in the world. Reality is the thing that is sought for. What is wanted is a creed of life, not of abstractions. It is the living urge of the present day that counts most with the alert minds of the younger generation.

We may briefly indicate two very definitely

defined points of view shared by youth in general, that seem to call for an ambitious advance toward the accomplishment of Christian unity. A spirit of divine adventure has been nurtured in the minds of these young people that simply cannot be circumscribed by denominational limitations. There is a world to be rescued from the mad imperialism of a drunken economics. There are races of men to be brought into reconciliation and peace with one another. War must be outlawed. Industry must be democratized. Every human passion must be brought into keeping with the purpose of God for the world. The tyrannies that enslave and the hatreds that consume are to be cast aside and thoughts of international goodwill are to be cultivated. Many of our young people, stirred to revolt by the tremendous and feverish rush of our modern material civilization, are looking to the Church to provide a way of escape. There opens before them the dim outline of a vast and significant enterprise, the placing of every human interest and activity under the dominion of Christ. This hope for the future of mankind cannot be envisaged within the mental image of a single denomination, no matter how energetic or resourceful that particular communion may happen to be. Bigger than any ism is youth's daring faith that

in Christ the world will find peace and satisfaction. This flame of divine adventure will eventually burn away the barriers that now divide the followers of Jesus Christ.

There is, in the second place, a new interpretation of religious loyalty, a loyalty that is considerate enough of the Church as an institution, but that is dynamically loyal to Christ as a person. This does not mean that the Church is to pass away. But it does mean that the Church is to be stripped of non-essentials. Included among these non-essentials, as viewed by youth, are the many creedal divisions that appeal to an authority quite outside of the New Testament gospel as preached and practiced by Jesus Christ. All doctrinal standards and theological tenets that cannot find in Christ their claim to infallibility, are to be side-tracked. That means that the sectarian biases that have sprung up during the past few hundred years are to be steadily and finally rejected.

There are, however, not a few students who are in revolt against the present day emphasis on the social aspects of religion. Within recent years there has sprung up on a good many campuses, particularly in the East, a type of evangelism popularly known as "Buchmanism." It is the conviction of many "Buchmanites" that personal salvation and not social righteousness

is the highest good of religion. The "Buchman" creed is said to consist of confidence, confession, conviction, conversion and conservation. Others use the three words woo, win and warn, to describe this particular method of soul-saving. In any event "Buchmanism" seems to be a return to that high state of emotional fervor that has always been more of a liability than an asset to the spread of the gospel.

Many of these "Buchmanites" regard themselves as soul surgeons, with a heavenly decreed commission to diagnose the spiritual ailments of the fallen and unregenerate, and having produced within them a profound sense of the shame of sin, and having elicited from them a public confession of their transgressions, to prepare the way for their entrance into the Kingdom of God. Evangelistic "house parties" are sponsored by some of these "Buchmanites" at which time public confessions are made under the strain of great emotional pressure. It is this particular phase of the "Buchman" method that draws the fire of the critic. The Philadelphian Society, a student religious organization at Princeton University, declared, in the late Fall of 1926, by a vote of 390 to 14, against giving any recognition whatever to "Buchmanism." In other places this undergraduate religious movement has been con-

demned with great severity as constituting a menace to the physical, mental and moral well-being of its devotees.

Without raising the question of the spiritual soundness of this particular ism it may be affirmed in all fairness that the students identified with it are, by implication, registering their protest against certain forms of the Christian religion. Many "Buchmanites" are rather abusive of those sectarian clergymen who, it is claimed, give too much of their time and energy for the advancement of their own denominational interests, to the neglect of the soul culture of their parishioners. It is alleged that these denominational preachers are unduly concerned with statistics, clerical rating and financial emoluments. This, in part, can hardly be denied. "Buchmanism," in this respect at least, is at war with the sectarian rivalries that continue to do violence to the unity of the Church. Viewed in this light, "Buchmanism" represents a definite departure from the religious experience and the ecclesiastical equipment of the present day. No one disputes the fact that this movement has attracted to it many younger churchmen and students whose spiritual life is a thing to be envied. If there are those who see in "Buchmanism" certain tendencies of questionable value the heroic thing would be

for those persons to correct without delay those defects in our modern religious life that seem to warrant the existence of a movement such as that which we have briefly described. The writer, in making reference to this cult, is simply desirous of further establishing his contention that many students are living in protest against the rigid conventionality of an inherited religious experience.

It must be added, however, that on every college campus, and within the organized life of every denominational body, there may be found a very honest and sincere grouping of young people who still cling to metaphysical definitions and creedal severities as the very essence of pure religion. But those who champion "Buckmanism" with its introspectivism on the one hand, and those who, on the other hand, are still enthralled with the faded glory of a metaphysical and creedal religion, are in the minority, very definitely so. Ask any college pastor or college professor, or teacher of religion or student worker what the great majority of the young people are thinking about with respect to religion, and invariably the answer will be, "The exaltation of Christ in every relation of life and society." Run your eye over the pages of these student note-books and you will find written there the "Magna Charta" of a new and

more glorious day for the future of organized Christianity.

It may be seriously doubted if ever again the world at large will be required to listen to the acrimonious and bitter debate on theological matters such as that through which we have so recently passed. It is to be particularly noted that this debate has been carried on chiefly by adults. There have been but few youthful champions among the contenders in this dispute. While their elders are debating metaphysics the youth gather in conferences of their own to discover a formula of action that will make Jesus Christ supreme in every area of human activity. The concern often expressed by those who are older for the religious life of those who are younger had better be reversed. We have every reason to feel grateful that in the youth of the land we see some promise that this deadly warfare between the disciples of Christ is to be brought to an end.

There have been many student gatherings within recent years and whenever students come together to talk about the Church it is always Jesus Christ about whom they talk, and Jesus Christ for whom they are willing to lay down their lives. Neither fundamentalism nor modernism is the thing about which these students are concerned. Theological disputes are

left for others. It is quite impossible to get students of today to debate the pros and cons of fourth century metaphysics. That doesn't mean that they are any less intellectual than their fathers. Quite the reverse. It is a further indication of the very thing we have been thinking about—a tendency to discard as relatively unimportant any appeal to religious authority that does not center in Jesus Christ.

We see here the result of this higher loyalty to Christ, a loyalty that approaches in fervor that of the early disciples; a loyalty that approaches in fortitude and courage that of the first century martyrs; a loyalty that compares favorably with that of Paul, whose passion for Christian unity absorbed all the lesser interests of his life, Jewish rites, Jewish blood and Jewish traditions. It is difficult to see how the sectional loyalties that are built up around denominational interests will be able to resist for very long this deeper and more significant loyalty to Christ that sweeps before it the theological accretions of the centuries.

To these various student attitudes toward Christ and the Church, there may be added certain other considerations that further stimulate youth's prayerful anxiety for a united Church. There are no more pilgrim lands to discover. If we cannot agree, theologically,

with our neighbors, we'll just have to make the best of it. We can't run away from those with whom we differ. If it were still possible for religious dissenters to rally their comrades about them and sail for unexplored lands and there propagate with an unrestricted freedom their dissenting views, then all this talk about Christian unity might very properly be thought of as something quite foolish. But the "Mayflower" will never again lift her sail to the winds. The day of escape from those with whom we find ourselves in conflict is over. We are members now of a great world neighborhood. That means that denominationalism has been turned back upon itself. Those who differ with respect to their theology must come to terms. While they may not of necessity agree to any particular statement of faith, they must, nevertheless, recognize that the line fences that formerly separated the devotees of one faith from those of another have been torn down. The only thing that remains to be done is to shake hands, forget the past, and in the spirit of Christian fellowship build a common altar to a common God.

The influence of the scientific spirit on the student mind has also tended to minimize the value of denominational distinctions. Instinctively a young man or young woman, looking at

the spires of a half hundred Christian churches, each dedicated to the same Christ but set over against the other because of some slight difference of opinion, will ask, Why? Why? Why? Why must we persist in doing violence to the fundamental principle of the Christian religion —oneness in Christ. Why must we continue with divisions that have long since survived the historic conditions that first gave rise to those divisions? If statesmen are able to settle their quarrels, then why cannot churchmen do the same? If the North and South are one politically, why cannot they be one spiritually? Why must we go on preaching unity and practicing disunity? Why must we have a multitudinous number of Church organizations that try, in effect, to render the same service to humanity? Why, if we worship the same God through the same Christ, is it necessary for us to walk separate and divergent paths on the way to Church? Why? Why? Why?

To many thousands of our young people these questions cannot convincingly be answered. And because they cannot be answered, the conditions out of which they arise will have to be remedied. That they will be remedied is being foretold by the youth of today who will be the leaders of the Church tomorrow. We will refer here to only two decisions both of which are

prophetic of a united Church in the days of tomorrow. Nine hundred students from nearly 200 colleges and universities of the United States, representing more than twenty denominations, came together in an Interdenominational Student Conference in Evanston, Illinois, during the Christmas holidays of 1925. After three days of discussion in which the Church had been critically but friendly reviewed, the following resolution was passed with but few dissenting votes:

"We favor the unification of all Christian churches. To secure this we suggest the union of all Protestant denominations. As a first step toward this end we suggest the unification of young people's societies—The Christian Endeavor, The Epworth League, The Baptist Young People's Union, The Luther League, etc.—and that this be done through the Federal Council of Churches, if possible.

• • • • •
"We suggest that all Christian colleges and theological schools be made undenominational in their character."

And in the Report of the Student Commission on the Cooperative Work of the Churches, that was prepared by students and submitted to the Evanston Conference, there will be found this very significant paragraph:

"We have had brought to our attention the two world movements that are now at work on the problem of Church union: The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work and the World Conference on Faith and Order. The former hopes for a far greater unity within Christendom along lines of practical endeavor. The latter is concerned with the doctrinal aspects of reunion. The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work met in Stockholm, in August, 1925. . . . It brought together into practical fellowship the Protestant Churches of America, England, and the Continent, together with the churches of the Eastern Orthodox faith. The World Conference on Faith and Order meets in Lausanne in 1927. The divisions of the Church with respect to faith, doctrine, sacraments and orders strike at the very heart of the entire question of church unity. We express our hope that the churches of Christ will be able to find some way of escape out of the ecclesiastical confusion of the present hour. Stockholm and Lausanne! The youth of America hails with genuine thanksgiving these movements toward the ultimate unity of the Christian Church. We feel that the Church, in these efforts, is facing toward the future."

It may be said that these students will not, in the future, directly mold the policy of the Church at large. It is the man in the pulpit, we are told, who will make the Church history of the coming years, not the man in the pew. Of

course many of the students who were present at the Evanston Conference will some day be in the pulpits of our American Churches. Still others will be in the pews, supplementing with their faith and prayers the pulpit's plea for a united Christendom.

We will assume for a moment that the Evanston Conference Resolutions may not accurately represent the mind of those who will most directly influence the future of the Church. We will turn therefore to the report of the fellowship meeting of four hundred and ten theological students that was held in Evanston, Illinois, on February 27, 1925.

"Imagine four hundred and ten students of theology, representing some fourteen theological colleges and every one of the more important Protestant branches of the Church, gathering in the same room around a common table to share in a common Sacrament of our Lord's Supper! A generation ago it would have been incredible.

"It marks in a dramatic manner the turning of the tide. After generations of disruption we are now witnessing the first steps in the recovery among Protestants of a sense of continuity throughout the fellowship of all those who know God in Christ and long to do His will. As far as the younger generation of ministers is concerned their mind is made up. They have seen

afar the spires of the city of God into which the treasures of all the denominations may be brought, and in which once again a united Christendom may present a solid front to the forces of Evil and Death. They have seen that vision. They recognize in it their supreme loyalty, and they will not allow themselves to be distracted by any lesser interest."

Can there be any doubt about the nearer approach of Christian unity when four hundred and ten students of our theological schools will break the bread of the Lord's Table in such a way that it may be said of them, "They have seen afar the spires of the city of God into which the treasures of all the denominations may be brought, and in which once again a united Christendom may present a solid front to the forces of Evil and Death"?

Chapter 4

THE PRESENT DAY INTERCHURCH APPROACH TO YOUNG PEOPLE.

That we may get a clearer idea of the manner in which this interdenominational point of view is being cultivated particularly on the college campus, we shall briefly describe a number of projects now being carried on in the name of religion that have for their purpose the strengthening of the spiritual life without any immediate regard to denominational interests.

There is, in the first place, the interchurch student pastorate which is being sponsored by the University Committee of the Council of Church Boards of Education. At Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, five Churches are co-operating in a united effort adequately to represent the Christian way of life to its rapidly growing student body. The cooperating Churches include the Baptist, the Disciples of Christ, the Episcopal, the Methodist Episcopal and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. A young man, the university pastor, officially represents each of these cooperating Churches. Competition and duplication are thereby elimi-

nated in an effort to realize the Kingdom of God on the campus. This interchurch student pastorate exists for the one supreme purpose of magnifying Christ in the mind of the students.

One will find on this campus a School of Religion which has come to occupy a place of high standing in the educational life of the university. In a statement explanatory of the courses offered in this school we find these words: "Religion is of universal interest and appeal. Its study, when free from sectarian bias, acquaints one with a rich heritage of thought and with significant modern trends." Such courses as "An Introduction to the Study of Religion," "The Literature of the Bible," "The Principles and Methods of Religious Education," and "The Psychology of Religion," are included in the curriculum of this school. Such questions as these are freely discussed: What is the relation between science and religion? What has pure religion to do with creeds? In what way will science affect the future life of the Church? In answering these questions no thought is given to the continuance or the discontinuance of our present day denominationalism. The problems under review are seen in their larger proportions, and the case for religion is viewed as hopeless unless the impact of a united Church

is pitted against the naturalistic tendencies that so unconsciously and yet so persistently creep into the philosophy of education and into the teaching functions of the school. Each of these courses is allowed two hours of elective credit. Already hundreds of students have been enrolled in this school. These young men and young women have come to the end of their college experience with a totally new conception of the Church. For the first time in their lives perhaps these students have shared in the growth of a religious fellowship without denominational bias and without either stressing or belittling denominational loyalties.

But that is only a part of the interdenominational adventure at Ohio University. There is an Interchurch Student Council. This is the social and fellowship side of the interchurch student pastorate. This Student Council is made up of student representatives of the cooperating Churches. The Wesley Foundation (Methodist Episcopal), The Westminster Foundation (Presbyterian), the Bethany Fellowship (Disciples), the Roger Williams Club (Baptist), and the Wartburg Club (Lutheran) find in the Interchurch Student Council a clearing house for the religious life of the entire student body.

Under the auspices of the Student Pastorate and the Student Council, deputation teams are

sent out to neighboring cities for the purpose of inculcating the Christian ethic into the industrial, social and racial life of these particular communities. These students do not go forth as Methodists, nor as Baptists, nor as Episcopalians, nor as Presbyterians, nor as Disciples. They go forth simply as Christians and as Christ bade them go, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and to preach and practice God's immutable moral laws in their contacts with their fellowmen. If such a holy living can be a part of the natural and normal part of the student while at the university, a religious life lived in Christian simplicity and without regard to denominational divisions, why cannot the same type of cooperative and unified religious life be possible in the days following graduation? The answer to that question is no more apparent than is the future development of the Church itself. Can there be any doubt that the emphasis on denominationalism is passing? As the old order passes the new order is being made.

An even more significant development for the future of organized Christianity is the rapidly expanding program of the Students' Religious Council at the University of Missouri. This organization looks beyond the line fences of Protestantism and envisages a religious fellow-

ship that is broad enough and sufficiently spiritual to include Protestants, Catholics and Jews. This is, in reality, a student movement, though the financial and moral aid furnished with such splendid enthusiasm by the national boards and local Churches is quite indispensable.

This Students' Religious Council includes within its membership the following groups: Baptist Young People's Union, Christian Student Congregation, Congregational Students' Club, Episcopal Students' Association, Evangelical Students' Club, Glennen Club (Catholic), Jewish Student Congregation, Presbyterian Student Association. The Board of Control consists of the pastors of the local Churches, the student secretaries or university pastors, the dean of the Bible College, the chairman of the Y. M. C. A. Advisory Board, three representatives of the University of Missouri and a student representative of each of the member organizations. Students are kept in a wholesome and vital relation to the Church of their choice but there is being developed at the same time a type of religious life that is far bigger than the shadow of a denominational past. This program has been characterized by a prominent Rabbi as a "God blessed effort of developing amity between students of different faiths."

Many times during the college year all the students are brought together under this interreligious and interdenominational influence, to discuss such themes as "Church Cooperation" and "The Promotion of Religious Unity." The different Young People's Societies of the co-operating denominations are thus brought into actual fellowship with one another for the promotion of an enlarged religious outlook. Surveys are made each year by the Students' Religious Council touching upon the social and religious life of the entire student body. The executive secretary of the Council is, in reality, the interchurch student pastor.

Then, too, there is a Bible College located nearby, rated as one of the best schools of religion on or near any university campus. The enrollment in 1925 was 436. Forty-six hours of work are now credited with the University of Missouri, of which fourteen may be counted toward the Bachelor of Arts degree. This Bible College, like the Students' Religious Council, is an interdenominational and cooperative institution. Four religious bodies have a part in its administration and instruction. A religious annual is published each year by the Council, entitled, "The Rosetta." This journal of student religious unity takes this name because "it symbolizes the spirit in which the or-

ganizations represented have worked together in a common cause." Each of these religious groups is characterized in this publication as "one of the petals of a rosetta, which, though a perfect unit in itself, is nevertheless enhanced when joined with others in a symmetrical whole." The 1926 edition of the Rosetta is dedicated "To the Youth on the campus of the University of Missouri who have caught a vision of a New Day when religious differences may be submerged in a Brotherhood of Endeavour." What history there is in the making for the Church of Jesus Christ!

At the University of Pennsylvania still another form of an interdenominational student pastorate is being evolved. The six largest Protestant denominations that cooperate here are the Presbyterian, Episcopal, Reformed, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist and Lutheran. Each of these denominations has a student pastor on the staff of the Christian Association. There is a student committee for each denomination and the chairman of this committee is a Vice-President of the Christian Association, elected by the members of his denomination. Each student pastor is also a Secretary of the Christian Association and is in charge of some phase of the general interdenominational work such as religious education, vocational guid-

ance, world missions, international relations and social service. All the members of the local evangelical Churches that minister in one way or another to the University of Pennsylvania students are, ipso facto, members of the Christian Association. Financial aid for the carrying on of this highly organized program of interchurch student activity is cheerfully given by the several boards of education of the participating Churches. Fifty or sixty groups of classes are organized yearly to discuss themes of a religious nature. No denominational bias enters into this program of religious education. A department of deputations sends into Philadelphia and nearby cities groups of from two to one hundred students with religious messages.

At the University of Montana, Missoula, Montana, there is a School of Religion that very definitely promotes this interdenominational viewpoint among thousands of students of the Northwest. The Director of this School is an interchurch pastor. Three hours elective credit is allowed by the university to each registered student for satisfactory work done in the School of Religion. Fifteen credits are allowed toward a university degree. Students taking these courses are directed into avenues of thought and religious activity in which denominational

distinctions are almost entirely obliterated. What is being done at the University of Montana, the University of Missouri, the University of Pennsylvania and Ohio University is being done in many other state institutions of learning, including the Colorado School of Mines, the California Agricultural College, Massachusetts Agricultural College, University of New Hampshire, the Agricultural College of New Mexico, Michigan Agricultural College and the Universities of Maine, Oregon and Vermont. Interdenominational workers may also be found at Ohio State University, the University of Illinois, Iowa State University, the University of Nebraska, the University of Kansas, the University of Washington, the University of Texas and the University of Oklahoma.

We have to consider in the second place the building of the interdenominational Church on or near the college campus. Perhaps the most significant piece of interdenominational work now being carried on by the students for the sake of students is that being sponsored by The People's Church, of Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan. This Church was organized in 1907 as a Congregational Church. In 1923 it was converted into a thorough going interdenominational institution. Four com-

munions, Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists and Presbyterians, have been cooperating financially in this student program since 1919. Each denomination has contributed a substantial sum toward the building of The People's Church. In the election of Church officers no attention is paid to denominational affiliations. For many years a Friend has been chairman of the Board of Elders. Students are elected on the Church boards and committees. In addition to the Minister there are a Director of Religious Education, a Director of Student Religious Work, an Associate Pastor, a Church Secretary, two Field Secretaries, a Director of Women's Student Work who is also the Y. W. C. A. Secretary, and a Secretary of Student Employment. A broad intellectual and spiritual basis is here being laid for an enduring demonstration of Christian unity. The students who worship at the altars of this Church are introduced to a Christ whose garments have not been rent asunder by the adherents of a divisive denominationalism. The People's Church of Michigan State College is training the young men and young women who will become a part of the foundation of the Church of tomorrow. A similar type of interdenominational Church is being organized on or near many other campuses.

Even in those institutions of learning where there is no interchurch pastorate there is a real effort being made by denominational workers to promote the cause of Christian unity. Hundreds of what might be called denominational student pastors are being sent into college centers by several of the stronger Church Boards of Education. Special Foundations are being established, such as the Wesley for the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Westminster for the Presbyterian and the Bethany for the Disciples, to furnish financial and professional aid for a more adequate ministry to the student groups of the particular denomination involved. But the name "denominational student pastor" is an anomaly. One is tempted at this point to generalize and say that the sectarian spirit engendered by these so-called student pastors is almost nil. These pastors, themselves young men, are inspired with the vision of a united Church. A student discussion group has been organized under the auspices of the Wesley Foundation at the University of California, for a study of the movements now in progress for the reunion of Christendom. A brief glimpse of the topics made use of in this forum on Christian unity will illustrate the manner in which students are becoming imbued with the challenge of a united Church and conversant

with the problems incident thereto. A critical inquiry is made into the nature of the various Church organizations—Catholic—Episcopal—and Congregational. Attention is given to the Conferences on Life and Work and Faith and Order. The basic principles of the Federal Council of Churches are then examined and the strength and weaknesses of this organization are appraised in the light of its effectiveness in promoting the unification of the Churches. Similar courses are being introduced into a large number of student gatherings and by the more forward looking denominational student pastors and university preachers. These men are keeping faith with the denominations under whose appointment they are serving, but they are, in addition, preaching the gospel of a faith that is bigger than any ism, and of a Church that partakes more of the future than of the present. Though not charged specifically with any interchurch responsibilities these denominational student pastors are with but few exceptions committed to the principles of Christian cooperation in one form or another.

Then again, in many centers of learning, where the local Churches and their respective denominational Boards of Education are not as yet able to provide for an interchurch pas-

torate, there are being organized various kinds of advisory councils that insure an interdenominational approach to the student body. We have in Washington State College at Pullman, Washington, an example of this type of program. There is, in this college center, a Coordinating Committee, made up of the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. Secretaries, the pastors of the local Churches, the student presidents of the Christian Associations, the Dean of Men and the Dean of Women. All of the religious activities of that particular campus are brought before this Coordinating Committee for its critical review. Everything of a strictly denominational character is ruled out of order. The result is that a non-sectarian type of religion is being cultivated in the mind of those students who are interested in the problems of religion and of Church administration. A splendid piece of cooperative work among denominational student pastors is being carried on at Cornell University and at the University of Michigan. In the former institution eight student workers are brought together for this cooperative service, and at the latter, fifteen.

The Continuation Committee of the Evanston Interdenominational Student Conference is sponsoring a number of religious projects that depend for their success and effectiveness

on the interdenominational cooperation of young people in student circles. Already a number of conferences have been held under the auspices of this Committee, one on "Students and the Industrial Order," at Earlham College, and another on "World Students and the Christian Church," at Princeton Theological Seminary. A number of other student retreats on "The Church and a Christian Internationalism," "The Church's Approach to College Students," and "The Educational Processes of the Church," are being contemplated by this Evanston Committee. We see here the beginning of a strong interdenominational student movement within the life of the Church, a movement supported in part by many of the denominational bodies themselves.

Here again we must mention the intercollegiate student movement of the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A. Within late years the undergraduates of our colleges and universities have been given a larger share in the executive and administrative responsibilities of the Student Department of the Christian Associations. As in the past the fundamental religious emphasis of this movement is loyalty to Jesus. This emphasis is sometimes non-denominational in its implications but it is more often interdenominational.

But it is not only in our schools and colleges where this interest in Church cooperation and a larger religious comradeship is manifesting itself among the young people of today. There are developments in the non-academic field which are very significant. If you will go into any city of any considerable size you will find the young people of the Protestant Churches restive under the ecclesiastical divisions by which they are separated into denominational groups. Requests are multiplying for the unification of the young people's societies of our several denominations as a first step in the accomplishment of a still greater and more far reaching unity. These requests are easier made than they are answered. In most of the denominations the young people's societies are not autonomous in the sense that they can, of their own initiative, break loose from their larger denominational affiliations. While the executive officers of these young people's societies are constitutionally restrained from entering into any organic fellowship of unity at the present time it is true that these leaders are showing a most commendable and cooperative earnestness in backing up the interdenominational projects that are now under way in the Church life of America. There is at the present time an Interdenominational Young People's

Committee, the members of which include the executive officers of many of the larger and more influential denominational young people's societies. This committee meets as occasion requires. Its chief task is in the realm of program making and through the collaboration of these young people's executives there is being developed a very wholesome interdenominational mindedness which cannot help but filter down into the young people's societies of the local Church.

The Federal Council of Churches has lately added an executive secretary to its staff whose chief concern is the interdenominational program in the realm of social Christianity. A Committee on World Friendship among Young People has been instituted by the Federal Council. Here too will be found the representatives of a majority of the larger denominational young people's societies. Under the auspices of this committee there are being organized union mass meetings of young people, particularly on World Goodwill Day and during Armistice Week. Such an interdenominational coming together of our young people from time to time certainly tends toward a breaking down of ecclesiastical divisions.

In this connection it must be recalled that in many City Councils of Churches there have been

and are still being organized Councils or Commissions of Young People. These Councils are nothing more nor less than an inter-Church movement among the younger members of our denominational bodies. In certain of these cities there will be found highly trained secretaries who have among other duties the promotion and development of these interdenominational contacts among the young people. These Councils are democratically organized and practically all of the young people's groups of any given locality are accorded a fair and adequate representation. Moral and spiritual matters pertinent to the life of youth are referred to these Councils and Commissions of Young People and a training is thereby given in the administration of religious responsibilities from an interdenominational point of view.

The International Council of Religious Education has its Department of Young People, headed by a very able and efficient secretariat. Whereas the Federal Council of Churches is building up an interdenominational consciousness among youth on the basis of an evangelical and social Christianity, the International Council of Religious Education is still further accentuating the principle of cooperation on the basis of a far reaching program of religious education. At the 1926 Birmingham Conven-

tion of the International Council there was convened a Congress of Christian Youth that brought together nearly two thousand of the youthful disciples of Christ into an interdenominational fellowship. We will witness within the next few years a remarkable development of an inter-Church consciousness through the gearing of this religious educational effort into all the other phases of interdenominational activity. On the missionary basis, too, our young people are seeing a picture of the Church in these larger dimensions. There might be mentioned here the many interdenominational conferences held each year under the auspices of the National Council of Women for Home Missions, the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions and the Missionary Education Movement.

Is it any wonder, in view of these conditions, that the youth of America respond with readiness and enthusiasm to the vision of a united Church? Need we wonder that close to one thousand students should gather in an interdenominational student conference as they did in Evanston during the Christmas holidays of 1925, and pass a resolution calling for a united Church? And is it surprising that theological students should enter with eagerness into an inter-seminary movement by means of which

hundreds of the future leaders of the Church find themselves looking upon the spires of the City of God from the pulpits and pews of a united Christendom? And what we have already seen is but the beginning. We have been sowing the seed, that is all. We shall witness within the not distant future the reaping of a harvest of spiritual dynamic that will lift the Church above the divisions made by men into the comradeship of a real and lasting unity.

There are enough wearers of the cap and gown in every graduating class of our State and Church Colleges and Universities, and enough of the more forward looking youth in our urban and rural centers, to keep the issue of Christian unity before the mind of the Church. They may be few in numbers in any given institution or community, but the sum total of their strength and the cumulative effect of their influence will prove to be tremendous. Every year this number will be added to; every year the call for Christian unity will grow more and more insistent, the efforts in behalf of Christian unity will become more and more persistent; until finally, we shall find ourselves kneeling by the side of Jesus, joining with Him in a prayer for the Oneness of His flock, and when we arise from our knees it will be to discover that the petty divisiveness to which we

have been giving ourselves has been nailed to the Cross.

Such a passion for Christian unity cannot be rendered void, nor can its prayer remain unanswered. The young people of to-day who are giving themselves to the reunion of Christendom are actuated by motives and inspired by incentives that are both divine and eternal. Discouragements may come, and will. Selfishness under the cloak of discipleship will manifest itself on more than one occasion for the temporary postponement of the thing these youthful crusaders have in mind for the Church of Christ. But these young people have girded themselves with the strength of the Infinite. They have put upon themselves the armour of God. And they will win.

Chapter 5

CHRISTIAN UNITY—IN THE UNITED STATES

The zeal and inspiration of youth for a united Church must now be supplemented with a working knowledge of what has already been accomplished in the task of bringing the Churches together. It is one thing to know that a problem exists. It is quite another thing to know how that same problem is to be solved. The present generation of young people is in no position to add anything of substantial value to the solution of the problem of Christian unity until it is better informed about the present day development of inter-church cooperation, local, national and international. The drama of a united Church is being played before our very eyes. Are we cognizant of what is going on? As young people we must be more critically observant of what is taking place before our very eyes. We wish briefly to introduce to those of our youthful comrades who are interested in a united Church an outline knowledge of the principles and methods of the interdenominational agencies that are already at work in furthering the cause of Christian unity.

Reference has already been made to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and to the historic unfolding of this organization. Within the short space of eighteen years the Federal Council of Churches has come to be recognized as one of the most influential bodies in the religious life of America. The rapid manner of its growth, the confidence imposed in it by countless millions of Christians in America and throughout the world, and the pioneering character of its achievements are evidences of a deep stirring within the life of the Church for a closer and more vital cooperation among our several denominational bodies. That the people want, and insist upon having, a visible and organizational manifestation of their essential oneness can hardly be doubted as one becomes familiar with the ever widening program of the Federal Council of Churches. The following denominations have officially related themselves to the Federal Council: Northern Baptist Convention, National Baptist Convention, Free Baptist Churches, Christian Church, Churches of God in North America, Congregational Churches, Disciples of Christ, Friends, Evangelical Church, Evangelical Synod of North America, Methodist Episcopal Church, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, African M. E. Church, African M. E. Zion

Church, Colored M. E. Church in America, Methodist Protestant Church, Moravian Church, National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church (Cooperative Body), Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (South), Primitive Methodist Church, Reformed Church in America, Reformed Church in U. S., Reformed Episcopal Church, Seventh Day Baptist Churches, United Brethren in Christ, United Presbyterian Church, United Lutheran Church (Consultative Body).

Their object in thus allying themselves together is "to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian Churches of America in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Saviour and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service and co-operation among them." This inner unity among the Churches of America is being expressed through the Federal Council of Churches in many ways. In the main, this organization does not concern itself with doctrinal matters. Theological disputes are left to others. The program of the Federal Council is more in the nature of a practical adventuring into the realms of conduct. For the accomplishment of that purpose the Federal Council has been divided into a number of Commissions and Committees, each of which is concerned with

certain phases of what might be called "applied Christianity."

The Commission on Evangelism stresses those spiritual sanctions without which our ecclesiastical machinery would avail us nothing. The inner life must be nurtured with the things of God before our programs for social redemption can be made effective. The Federal Council's Commission on Evangelism and Life Service brings the Churches of Christ in America to their knees before Him from whom inspiration and strength are derived for the doing of His will on earth. The need for personal evangelism is emphasized. Individual relationships with God are given paramountcy. Soul character is regarded as one of the essentials of the social gospel. The real service of this Commission to the Church cannot be recorded upon the printed page. It operates within the realm of the Spirit. It kindles the fire of the Eternal within the souls of men. It prepares in the wilderness of our modern civilization a highway for the Lord. It focuses the mind and the ministry of the Church on the welding together of the human and the divine. When men go two by two or denomination by denomination to introduce men to Christ they go, not as sectarians, but as devotees of our common Lord.

Through the Commission on the Church and

Social Service the Federal Council and its co-operating denominations are brought into working contact with industry and the social movement in the United States. It is the conviction of this department of the Federal Council that the dominance of the Christian motive and the application of Christian principles in the human relationships of industry, is a vital work of the Kingdom of God, and essential also to the greater prosperity of industry itself. Through the years this Commission has rendered to the cause of industrial democracy an invaluable service. It has stood against efforts to break the organized labor movement as against the welfare of the workers and against public policy. It was largely responsible, with the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and the Central Conference of Rabbis, for the discontinuance of the twelve-hour day in the steel industry. The widespread observance of Labor Sunday is an evidence of the vital manner in which this Commission has been able to unite the Churches of America in efforts for industrial democracy. The need for a larger and more Christian cooperation between labor and capital is preached from thousands of pulpits on that particular Sunday. The relation of religion to the labor movement and to the whole of industry is being made more manifest as a re-

sult of these and similar activities. Attention is now being given to such problems as unemployment, child welfare, delinquency, public recreation, prison labor and religious and social work in jails and houses of correction. In cooperation with the American Social Hygiene Association a study is being made of sex education and the moral and physical conditions in communities which make for happy family and social life. Never again will the Churches of America deal with the problems of industry and social service as isolated denominational units. Both capital and labor are beginning to recognize that in a cooperative Christianity, such as that achieved through the Federal Council of Churches, there lies the only adequate solution of our social and class difficulties. The Commission on the Church and Social Service, in the name of a united Protestantism, points to Jesus Christ as the way over which we must travel toward the accomplishment of industrial justice.

The Federal Council's Commission on the Church and Race Relations was organized for the purpose of asserting "the sufficiency of Christianity as the solution of race relations in America." Never before in the history of the Church in the United States has such a concerted and persistently sustained effort been made to cultivate a sense of brotherliness be-

tween the white and negro elements of our community and national life. Hostility and prejudice are surrendering to the gospel of mutual respect and Samaritan friendliness. Negroes and whites must live together in the United States. Colored people cannot and will not be segregated. They are not an inferior race. They demand and deserve a "square deal" from both Church and State. Through the Federal Council of Churches it has become possible for the negro to vocalize his aspirations for a larger opportunity for educational and spiritual advancement. Within recent years, under the auspices of this Commission, there have been held a number of Interracial Conferences, participated in by white and colored leaders on the basis of a religious and intellectual equality. All phases of the racial question are brought under review and frankly and openly discussed. As a result of these Conferences there have been organized under the direction of City and State Councils of Churches a large number of Race Relations Commissions. This is something new in the community life of the American people. When we can have in every city of the United States a Commission on Race Relations, organized on a democratic basis and made up of the ablest leaders of all the racial groups involved, who shall meet together at frequent intervals

to check up on conditions and to formulate a program of racial cooperation then the day of race riots and bloodspilling will be a thing of the past. Such a ministry of racial reconciliation would be out of the question were it not for the Federal Council of Churches through which the Christian ideals of brotherhood can be interpreted with a note of authority and with the corporate influence of a Church united in service to back up its program and to validate its pronouncements.

Of particular interest to young people is the effort now being made by the Church to abolish war. From the very beginning of its history the Federal Council of Churches has been concerned with the establishment of a Christian world order and the attainment of an unbroken peace between the nations. Only scant attention had been given to the Church's responsibility for a warless world when the Federal Council was first organized. War had come to be accepted, even in religious circles, as one of the inevitable by-products of human nature. Prayers for peace had ascended from the altars of the Church, and occasional sermons on peace had been preached, but that was all. The Churches were without a plan of strategy. They had an objective but were without the means of reaching it. They lacked that cohe-

siveness without which success in any moral adventure is impossible. But when the forces of the Church were marshalled together under an allied command this situation was gradually improved. Today at least twenty-five denominations have their officially appointed Commissions or Committees, functioning, for the most part, through the Federal Council's Commission on International Justice and Goodwill. The Church's campaign for a warless world is on and there will be no letting up in these efforts until the war drums cease to beat.

It would be quite impossible in this short space to name the many activities initiated and carried on by this Commission during the past fifteen years for the accomplishment of this lofty purpose. With the cooperation of this Commission some thirty communions met in Washington, D. C., in December, 1925, for the holding of a National Study Conference on the Churches and World Peace, the findings of which are now serving as the basis for a common drive in the name of Christ against organized warfare. Each year the Churches in America are summoned to observe Armistice Sunday and World Goodwill Sunday. The Institute of International Relations from the Christian Viewpoint is held yearly at Chautauqua, N. Y., under the auspices of this Commis-

sion. Educational campaigns have been carried on among the Churches in behalf of disarmament and for the adhesion of the American Government to the Permanent Court of International Justice. Throughout the past several years moral support has been given to the League of Nations campaign for the elimination of the international narcotic drug traffic. An educational campaign is now being sponsored for the removal of all discriminatory legislation in our immigration and naturalization policies. Relations with Mexico are interpreted on a basis higher than purely financial and commercial considerations. Thought is given to the social and religious welfare of the Mexican people. Discouragement is given to the frequent demands made upon Congress for the breaking off of diplomatic relations with our Southern neighbor. Perhaps one of the most conspicuous services which this Commission renders the cause of international comity is to be found in the vital concern assumed with respect to current developments in our civil, political and military life. Just recently a vigorous protest was made against compulsory military training in our schools and colleges, the obvious purpose of which is the making of soldiers. The "Mobilization Day" program of the War Department met with the determined

resistance of the Churches and through this Commission protests were sent to Washington calling upon the President to forbid the use of Armistice Day as an occasion for the parading of our military prowess. Through the influence of the Churches, and as a result of the President's action, Armistice Day is to be preserved as a day of peace. Furthermore, these so-called "Mobilization Days" have been apparently abandoned, at least, temporarily. And so it goes. The Churches of America have in the Commission on International Justice and Goodwill an agency for the cultivation in America and throughout the world of that spirit that will lead the nations to meet their problems by methods of peace and conciliation.

The recent action of the Federal Council of Churches in taking steps to build goodwill between Jews and Christians is something of a departure from the traditional exclusiveness of organized religion. It is also an attempt to remedy one of the most long standing and dramatic of the tragedies in religious relationships —the persecution of the race of Jesus in the name of Jesus. It is, in fact, so far as can be known, the first time in nineteen centuries of Christendom that a large Christian group has thrown its weight thus directly in the scales in behalf of understanding, friendship and mutual

regard. Much patience and many years and a great deal of genuine Christianity and good Jewishness on either side of the problem will be required. The Federal Council has adopted a program of education and has joined with the American Jewish organizations in a number of cooperative undertakings in behalf of goodwill.

Exchange lectures between Jewish and Christian theological seminaries have been arranged within recent months. It is imperative for fairness sake that each religion shall be represented by its own spokesmen. This is true both ways, in Jewish-Christian relations. This program of exchange lectures is not a free for all of rival evangelists, trying in turn to Judaize or Christianize their hearers. It is simply a fair and friendly attempt on either side to gain an intimate and personal understanding of the problems involved. If the result be the revelation of much unsuspected common ground, then all the better for our chances of harmony and worthwhile common effort. But that is not all. One of the most vital influences in modern life is the large community gathering where people of different faiths and kinds are brought together. In more than a hundred meetings of this character arranged for by the Federal Council's Committee on Goodwill between Jews and Christians, thousands of people

have come together to hear Rabbis, Clergymen and Priests discuss the wide Americanism that is roomy enough for all. Important as these and other factors have been, the most important undertakings have not borne thus directly on goodwill. The chief of these other and indirect influences have been the "Forums" developed by the executives of this Committee in informal cooperation with Jews and others. In the Forum Jew and Protestant and Roman Catholic, and men of every color of skin may come together in the high quest of truth. There is a surpassing need of this influence in modern times. A Forum is humanity coming to reason together. No preaching can equal the effectiveness of cooperation in reasoning. The Federal Council is partly prompted by a social and spiritual "utilitarianism" in its Jewish-Christian work. It feels that society can ill afford the wilful self-impoverishment that flows from prejudice. The "sound of the loom" weaving that rich tapestry of a sharing American society is but faintly heard while ill will has its way. The Federal Council would hear that loom at its full power, weaving the design of a strong and friendly democracy in our modern life.

One of the most significant things about the Federal Council's program and policy is its commitment to freedom and research. The

Federal Council's Department of Research and Education, in a way that is friendly and sympathetic toward the Church, ferrets out the facts of any given situation. These facts are appraised in all fairness and their significance for social education and religious culture is constructively set forth. In carrying out this policy research studies are made from time to time of such current issues as the Farmers' co-operative movement, the prohibition question, the problem of contract labor in prisons and recent developments in rural life. Only recently this Department participated with the National Catholic Welfare Conference and the Central Conference of American Rabbis in an investigation of the strike of locomotive engineers and firemen on the Western Maryland Railroad. The studies now in process include women's work in the Churches, employees representation plans in industries, and the labor situation in Passaic, New Jersey. At this writing plans are being considered for undertaking a sympathetic approach to the study of the relation of religion to health, and a study of certain aspects of the Church as employer.

The organized religious forces of America have long stood in need of just the type of research program as that to which the Federal Council is now giving itself. The pronounce-

ments of Church assemblies and the declarations of the pulpit have often been discounted in the mind of the public in view of the insufficient data upon which the decisions of the Church have been premised. The social sciences are making available to the Church at large a body of scientifically deduced facts and principles which, if rightly used, will be of immense service in authenticating the message of the Christian religion to the modern world.

It is the further task of the Federal Council, through its general secretariat, to interpret this program of a cooperative Christianity to the Church at large and to assist, wherever possible, in the organization of City and State Councils of Churches. It is axiomatic that the larger success of the Federal Council's program is conditioned in a very vital way upon the enlargement of the Church Federation movement locally. A large number of other religious interests that could not adequately be furthered by the Churches working separately are cared for in this interdenominational manner by the Federal Council of Churches. The General Committee on Army and Navy Chaplains cooperates with the Army and Navy Departments in providing spiritual ministry for the men in the Service, and in securing chaplains who are properly equipped for this ministry in the two

branches of our national defense. The Editorial Council of the Religious Press approaches the many problems of religious journalism from the advantageous position of a non-sectarian concern. Special emergencies that call for the philanthropic help of the Churches, such as the Japanese earthquake, the famine in China, and the more recent storm disaster in Florida, are met with a most commendable promptness by the Committee on Mercy and Relief. Contacts with European Protestantism are strengthened through the functioning of the Federal Council's Commission on Relations with Religious Bodies in Europe. It was due largely to the sympathetic helpfulness of this Commission that there was organized in 1922 the Central Bureau for the Relief of the Evangelical Churches of Europe. With the limited means at its disposal the Central Bureau has already become a potent factor in the religious life of the continent. It is confidently expected that within the next five years this organization, working in close harmony with the Federal Council of Churches, will do much to put the religious life of Europe on a firm foundation. Aside from its contact with European Churches, the Federal Council is endeavoring to establish more friendly relations with the Eastern Churches. It has a separate Committee for this

purpose and under the auspices of this Committee an ambassador of goodwill has gone to Athens from the Churches of America to the Churches of the Near East. The object of this Committee is at once to interpret to the Eastern Church the spiritual life of America, and at the same time to give to the Church in America a more sympathetic understanding of the historic communions of the East. The way seems open to more cordial relations and effective cooperation between these two branches of Christendom than has ever been the case in the past. And finally, the Commission on Christian Education is charged with the double responsibility of laying before the Church bodies of America the urgent necessity of evolving a more comprehensive and satisfactory program of religious education, and of further cooperating with the other Departments of the Federal Council for the undergirding of their numerous projects with educational policies that are sound and pedagogically correct.

It is not in the machinery of the Federal Council, nor in the executive management of its several Departments that we are able to find the real significance of this organization for the future of the Church. The Federal Council of Churches, in its deeper aspects, is something akin to a spiritual dynamic that gives life and

inspiration to the upward and outward reach of the Churches of Christ in America. We find in the Federal Council an assurance that in Jesus Christ there is a power strong enough to bring every human relationship under the sovereign purpose of the Eternal. The young people of America, especially those of the academic world, have been quick to recognize in the Federal Council a spiritually progressive movement that is bringing to the denominations constituent to it a gratifying enlargement of vision and a welcome augmentation of religious vigor.

The Federal Council has demonstrated to a doubting world the possibility of unity in diversity. Without encroaching either upon the varied forms of worship or upon the interpretations of creed peculiar to the many Churches that make up its organizational life, the Federal Council has succeeded in bringing into the life and work of the American Churches a comprehensive oneness of purpose and a long sought for but hitherto unattained unity of action.

We will now turn to those other phases of the interdenominational movement in America, stressing in order the cooperative approach of the Churches in the fields of Christian education, world peace and Christian missions. A

final word will then be said of the organic union movement in the United States.

The Christian forces of Protestantism in America have been federated together for the promotion of religious education in the home, Church and community. The International Council of Religious Education was formed in 1922 by the merging of the International Sunday School Association and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations. Thirty-six communions, with a total membership of more than twenty-one million, cooperate in the International Council. These denominational bodies elect from among their own number one half of the total membership of the Council's governing body. On this executive committee there are one hundred and ninety representatives, one half selected by the thirty-six denominations, allotted numerically in proportion to membership, and an equal number selected by the auxiliary state and provincial councils of religious education.

The two principal committees of the Council are the International Lesson Committee which selects the topics of the Sunday School lessons used by the cooperating denominations, preparing also the curricula for vacation and weekday Church schools, and the Committee on Education which outlines courses of study for the

training of teachers and leaders and to which are referred all matters relating to standards and educational policy. State and Provincial Councils of Religious Education have been organized as auxiliaries of the International Council, representing the cooperating denominations and Christian forces in the several States of the United States and the Provinces of Canada. Each one of these Councils elects at least one representative on the International Executive Committee. Councils of religious education are being organized in counties, cities and local communities to carry out on an extensive scale the program of religious education laid out by the International Council.

There are fifteen Professional Advisory Sections in the Council, representing the different educational groups specializing in the field of religious education, as follows: Children's Work, Young People's Work, Adult Work, Directors of Religious Education, Denominational Editors, Denominational Publishers, International and National Executives, State and Regional Executives, City Executives, Professors of Religious Education, Laymen, Week-Day Education, Vacation Schools, Leadership Training, and Negro Work.

The many activities of the International Council have been carefully and scientifically

departmentalized. The Department of Leadership Training is committed to the task of training teachers in religion so that religious education may be carried on as effectively as general education. Heretofore the only question asked of a prospective church school teacher was, "Will you take the class?" That question is being discarded. Realizing the tremendous importance of teaching religion the International Council is supervising the organization of community schools for the training of teachers and leaders for Church schools and for vacation and week-day Church schools. Under the direction of this Department there are held each year three International Summer Training Schools at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Lake Winnipesaukee, New Hampshire, and Geneva Glen, Colorado. The religious educational movement in the United States is gaining prestige very rapidly, and this growing influence is largely due to the effectiveness of the International Council's program of leadership training. Many hundreds of communities have now organized their own interdenominational schools of religion for the training of their own teachers of religion.

Young people will be particularly interested in the activities of the Department of Young People's Work. To aid in the preparation of a

program for the young people of the North American continent a Committee on Christian Life Program for Youth has been created. This Committee contains, among others, members of the International Council's Committee on Education and the Young People's Professional Section, a representative of the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A., a Christian Endeavor member, a High School educator, and other specialists in the field of adolescent religious education.

It is the purpose of this Committee to fashion a well balanced educational program for the youth of the land. An effort is being made to include in this approach to youth both the social and the pietistic aspects of the religious life. Adolescent religious education is to be moved forward to the day when the character building endeavors of those religious and moral agencies touching the life of youth shall be co-ordinated into a single, sweeping program of inspiration and power. Only an interdenominational organization such as the International Council could succeed in such an undertaking. And it is succeeding.

The 1926 Birmingham Congress of Young People shows what can be accomplished in the name of youth when once the interdenominational appeal gets a hearing. Two thousand

young people were there brought together and their spiritual life was enriched and their social vision broadened as a result of this intercommunion fellowship. There are also being held each year, under the direction of this Department of Young People's Work, six International Council Camp Conferences for Older Boys and Girls.

In appreciation of the youth program initiated and carried on by this Department one Young People's Worker of a large denomination is quoted to have said, "We want a program for our boys and girls, a Church-centered program, a program that comes to them through our Church channels, but we do not want an exclusively denominational program. Our boys and girls live in communities with boys and girls of other denominations, mostly in small communities. When our program gets to them we do not want it to divide them from their companions; we want it to bind them together. That means that we should all work together in creating our program and not separately."

The Department of Research and Service is giving primary concern to the rounding out of a complete educational program and to the development of a correlated curriculum for the Sunday and week-day sessions of the Church

school. The Department of Vacation Schools, as its name implies, is bringing the cultural influences of a Christian education within reach of thousands of children who are not ordinarily reached by the church schools. The otherwise idle hours of the vacation period are being made to count for character building. The Department of Home Visitation is developing a type of evangelism closely akin to that practiced by the early disciples. This program involves a carefully organized visitation of the homes of a given area to discover Church preferences and to lay the basis for a campaign of personal evangelism. There is also a Department of Organization and Promotion that assists in the organization and promotion of State and Local Councils, and in the extension and development of the work in the field. Only recently the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools merged with the International Council. This has made possible the creation of a new Department which includes both vacation Church school work and week day religious instruction. One of the very latest developments of the Council is to be seen in the development of a Department of Children's Work.

Although in existence but a few short years the International Council has given ample evidence of its high usefulness to the Church, the

home and the community. President Coolidge has truly said, "There is no substitute for morality and religious convictions. Unless these abide, American citizenship will be found unequal to its task." The International Council, by virtue of the strength transfused into it by the associated denominational bodies, is giving to America and to the world one of the most challenging demonstrations of spiritual daring that we have been privileged to witness for many a day. It is imparting to the youth of our land that morality and religious conviction without which "American citizenship will be found unequal to its task."

A still further type of interdenominational cooperation in the field of education has been made possible through the functioning of the Council of Church Boards of Education. Twenty denominational Boards of Education are affiliated with this organization. These Boards are associated with some four hundred colleges, as well as a number of junior colleges and secondary schools. At least sixty tax supported universities and colleges are likewise made the beneficiaries of the ministry of this Council with its constituent Boards.

In the denominational college the Council, in addition to its interest in all phases of college administration and life—financial, academic

and student welfare—contributes to the building up of programs and policies of religious education and Bible study, while in the tax supported institutions the ministry of the local Churches to student groups is unified and made more effective, and general supervision is given to different forms of religious education. This particular feature of the Council's program, as we have already observed, is carried on under the direction of a University Secretary and a University Committee. A large proportion of the interdenominational student work referred to in chapter four has been made possible through the untiring efforts of this University Secretary and his committee.

This Council applies the principles of research to the problems of education. Hundreds of educational institutions make use of the survey department of the Council for the promotion of religious projects on the college campus. An added note of authority is given to the research activities of the Council in view of its close relation to the Association of American Colleges. It is of the highest importance that our educational world should have just this sort of an interdenominational source of research information. This research material is in great demand. Students, faculty members and officers of Protestant, Catholic, independ-

ent and tax-supported institutions appeal to the Council for expert advice in the building of an adequate system of Christian education.

The Council of Church Boards of Education has an entree to a good many campuses, particularly those of tax-supported institutions, where a strictly denominational body would be barred out. The officers of our state universities are more concerned with the issues of religion and moral living on the campus than with any other single problem. With but few exceptions they welcome every effort made by the Church to infuse campus life with religious principles and with Christian standards of conduct. But they protest, and rightly so, against any denominational or sectarian emphasis. When, therefore, this Council, unincumbered by denominational restrictions, knocks at the door of our tax-supported institutions, it is welcomed and with the cooperation of faculty and trustees it is able to make a place for religion in the thought and life of many thousands of students. Inter-church student pastorates are instituted. Bible Schools and Schools of Religion are organized and situated on or near the campus. In many of these state colleges and universities academic credit is being given for the work done in these interdenominational Schools of Religion. In these and other ways

the Christian Church, through this Council, is able to minister in the name of Christ to a vast throng of students.

The Council also publishes a very fine body of literature on the subject of Christian education. Much of this is in the nature of source material and is made use of by educational advisors and college administrators. A monthly magazine "Christian Education" is issued by the Council and is sent to thousands of college presidents, teachers, trustees, regents' board secretaries and student workers. Candidates for life service are recruited by the Council through a committee created for that purpose. The Council is now being asked to undertake a series of studies covering every phase of Bible Study and religious education work in denominational and tax-supported institutions.

We have had in late years an undue amount of emphasis on realism in our educational processes. It is indeed fortunate for the Christian church and the Christian college that we have had during these critical days an organization such as the Council of Church Boards of Education whose duty it has been to keep the fires of Christian idealism burning on the college campus. It is not too much to say that had our denominational Boards of Education been required to meet the present day menacing chal-

lenge of materialism within the field of education, in an isolated and disintegrated fashion, they would have broken down under the tremendous pressure of their task. But with their resources and energies unified in an interdenominational manner these Boards of Education have succeeded where otherwise they might have failed.

As the work of this Council broadens there will be need of an ever increasing number of young men and women to carry on this interdenominational ministry to student groups.

Working in close harmony with the Federal Council's Commission on International Justice and Goodwill is the American Branch of the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches. As its name implies it is an international organization with branches in twenty-nine different countries. The World Alliance within recent years has been instrumental in bringing the Churches of Christendom into a covenant of protest against war. With its central headquarters in London the World Alliance sends out to the ends of the earth healing influences of conference and conciliation. In the international field this organization has become the visible expression of the growing desire for cooperation among the Christians of the world. The secretaries of the

World Alliance cross and recross the oceans preaching the gospel of international friendship, bringing together the churchmen of many creeds into a Christian brotherhood for the preservation of peace, and making more effective the agencies of cooperation between the several nations.

The American Branch of the Alliance does not organize local units for an intensive study of the peace question. That is the work of the Federal Council's Commission on International Justice and Goodwill. It does, however, avail itself of this local machinery for a more popular, even though less official presentation of the cause of peace. It sponsors Field Days at pivotal places across the country at which time distinguished leaders are brought together to give information and inspiration on matters pertaining to international amity. Technical experts on constructive international programs accompany these deputations. The result of these short, intensive drives is to arouse public opinion to the urgent necessity of settling international disputes by peaceful methods.

Under the auspices of the Alliance there is held each year a National Goodwill Congress, covering the period of Armistice Day. The 1926 meeting was held in Pittsburgh, and had for its central themes "The Moral Issues of

Disarmament," and "America's Responsibility and Method of International Cooperation." The findings of each Congress are incorporated in a Message which is sent to a large number of the representative leaders of Churches of all denominations, fraternal organizations, service clubs, educational institutions, welfare societies and other bodies through which the molding of public opinion is carried on. This Message, released annually, has come to be recognized as an interpretation of the highest value on the current tendencies of our international life.

Perhaps one of the most significant contributions which the American Branch of the World Alliance has made to the cause of international peace, was the convening of a Speakers' Conference which met in Chicago for a two-day period during the early summer of 1926 to discover a basis of unity for American participation in international cooperation for world peace. This Conference, which worked for harmony among the advocates for peace, was of peculiar importance in view of the confusion that has lately existed in the public mind concerning the principles and methods through which world peace is to be achieved. This greater solidarity among those who are laboring for international understanding cannot help but be followed by a more united approach and

a more strategic advance in the twentieth century crusade for a warless world. We are able to understand something of the significance of the World Alliance to the cause of peace when it is recalled that the program sponsored in the United States by the American Branch is duplicated in whole or in part in at least twenty-nine other nations.

The cooperation of the Churches in the American Branch of the World Alliance is not official in the sense in which the affiliation of these Churches to the Federal Council of Churches is official. It does not, for that reason, represent the same type of cooperating Christianity as has been achieved through the interdenominational organizations just referred to. No interpretation of the movement for Church union would be complete, however, without a reference to this body which has for so many years labored for a closer comradeship among the disciples of Christ in order to insure to the people of a war-weary world that peace which is to be achieved through Him. The World Alliance is helping to sow the seed for that rich harvest time when the Churches of Christ will be one in Him as He is one in the Father.

Chapter 6

CHRISTIAN UNITY—IN THE UNITED STATES—(*Continued*)

Interdenominational cooperation is nowhere more vitally needed than in the missionary activities of the Christian Church. A number of steps have been taken to consolidate and unify the forces of the Churches of Christ as they venture forth to evangelize the world in the name of their common Master. The World Missionary Conference that was held in Edinburgh in 1910 gave a stimulating impetus to these local movements, and itself furnished the initiative for the cooperation of the Boards of Foreign Missions in the international field. Among the interdenominational bodies already organized to insure the effective working together of the several communions of the Church in their missionary efforts are the following: The Home Missions Council, The Council of Women for Home Missions, The International Missionary Council, the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, The Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America and the Missionary Education Movement.

The Home Missions Council is playing a vital part in promulgating practical plans of cooperation in Church work. It comprises the Home Mission Boards of twenty-eight denominations and its chief aim is the Christianization of America. Much attention is being given to the development of a better coordination of the forces which are working with racial groups, such as the Mexicans in the United States, the Indians, Orientals, Negroes, and Immigrants generally. Eight Government Indian Schools are provided with interdenominational religious workers under the direction of a joint committee from this Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions. In a similar way a follow-up service for newly arriving immigrants is being carried on. Competition between the several denominational bodies is thereby reduced to a minimum.

Much attention is being given to the development of the cooperative spirit in the cultivation of the home missions field. The aim is to secure efficient service for every community with the least duplication and over-lapping. Some fourteen States are cooperating in this endeavor. The Council is likewise aiding a number of State Agricultural Colleges in setting up Summer Schools for the training of pastors. In this way the talent of these schools is combined

with that which the several Home Mission Boards are able to furnish much to the advantage of all concerned. This plan makes possible a strong faculty at a minimum of expense to the denominations. Eleven such schools were in the program for 1926. Standing committees give consideration to specific types of work during the Church year. Altogether the interests and activities of the Council are as varied as those of the Boards involved in the organization.

The Council of Women for Home Missions evolves a program which is the result of the unified thinking and activity of the Women's Home Mission Boards of the twenty-two denominations which make up its constituency. Its field of cooperative endeavor reaches beyond this constituency, for in conjunction with the Missionary Education Movement the Council publishes annually the Home Mission Textbooks and other Home Mission literature. In cooperation with the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions there is observed each year the Day of Prayer for Missions. Plans are now in process of development which will include in the planning and in the observance of this day the women of the world.

Affiliated with the Council are nineteen inter-denominational Conferences and Schools of

Missions, meeting annually in various sections of the country and including in their program the study of Home Mission Text Books. Associated also with the Council are more than ninety groups of women organized locally as Missionary Unions, Councils of Churchwomen, and Women's Departments of Federations and Councils of Churches. There is conducted each year at Chautauqua under the auspices of the Council a Home Missions Institute for the training of Mission workers and leaders.

The Committee on Student Work, of the Council, in conjunction with similar committees from five other national bodies, form the Federated Student Committee, which becomes the clearing house for plans and policies in the student field. Thirteen of the constituent Boards cooperate through the Committee on Farm and Cannery Migrants in the establishment of stations demonstrating Christian social service in canneries and on fruit and vegetable farms and ranches employing migrant women and children. This work has been officially endorsed by the Federated Student Committee as the home mission interdenominational project for student interest and gifts.

Through its legislative Committee the Council keeps informed on matters of national and international interest. Action is taken upon

such legislation as relates to home mission interests and through the Women's Joint Congressional Committee the Council cooperates with other National organizations in the field of legislation. We have here a splendid type of interdenominational activity among the women of our Christian churches. In cooperation with the Home Missions Council joint committees on racial groups help to coordinate and correlate the denominational programs. It is to be noted, finally, that the program of the Council of Women for Home Missions includes as consultative bodies the National Board of the Y. W. C. A., National Woman's Christian Temperance Union and Student Fellowship for Christian Life Service.

In the foreign missionary work of the Church there has been organized the International Missionary Council that brings into the world-wide program of evangelism a very definitely conceived policy of cooperation. We shall concern ourselves here with a simple statement of the beginnings of this Council, reserving for subsequent pages a more detailed account of the cooperative missionary projects that are now being sponsored by this organization in different parts of the world.

This Council was brought into being through the labors of the Continuation Committee of the

World Missionary Conference which was held in Edinburgh, in 1910. It was at that historic gathering where the pressing need for an inter-denominational approach to the problems of world evangelism was made articulate. The International Missionary Council was created to meet that need. Its organization was delayed for many years as a result of the Great War. It was not until 1920, in Crans, Switzerland, that this world-wide missionary body began to take shape. The Council, which is a delegated body, was finally organized in 1921, at Lake Mohonk. Its personnel and working committees are made up of the regularly appointed representatives of the national missionary organizations of the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Germany, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Japan, China, India, the Near East and Latin America.

The four-fold purpose of this Council is:

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation on missionary questions, to enlist in the solution of these questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in all countries, and to make the results available for all missionary societies and missions.

2. To help to coordinate the activities of the

national missionary organizations of the different countries and of the Societies they represent, and to bring about united action where necessary in missionary matters.

3. Through common consultation to help to unite Christian public opinion in support of freedom of conscience and religion and of missionary liberty.

4. To help to unite the Christian forces of the world in seeking justice in international and inter-racial relations.

While Christian unity in any organic sense of that word is not the specific object of the Council, the practical effect of its many activities contributes substantially toward that end. The Committeee of the International Missionary Council that met in Rattvik, Sweden, during July, 1926, seriously deliberated on the possible development, within the near future, of indigenous Churches in mission lands. Only in rare cases are these native Church bodies divided along denominational lines. Those to whom we have been sending missionaries are, in turn, giving to the Churches of the Occident a much needed object lesson in Christian unity. In sponsoring union educational institutions and training schools on the mission field the International Missionary Council is hastening the day when the Church everywhere shall be

One. Consideration was given at Rattvik to a proposal for the establishment of an international institute for the training of missionary leaders from both East and West. It is impossible to imagine on what basis the denominational mind could be justified in intruding into the educational and religious ministry of such an institute. In other words, missionary activities are now being thought of as something more consequential than the statistical growth of any particular denomination. As in the case of the Federal Council of Churches doctrinal matters are excluded from the consideration of this organization. But who can deny the fact that there is represented in the ministry of this Council a unity of faith and belief powerful enough to triumph over principalities and powers and the rulers of darkness? The alleged significance of our theological disputes simply fades out of the picture as Christians stand together with Christ before their fellow-men. This Council, in its practical operations, has demonstrated once and for all, that brotherliness, mercy, love, peace, charity and reconciliation are the fruits of the spirit of the eternal, not the discoveries of theological investigation. No area of human life is regarded as being outside the province of this Council. Its ministry is to all the world. Racial and national bound-

aries are unknown to this interdenominational agency of the churches as it functions for the redemption of the human race.

It is worth noting that the International Missionary Council in formulating plans for the 1928 world conference of that body, which is to be held in Jerusalem, has recommended that "those responsible for the appointment of delegates . . . should have in view the representation, first, of women, and, second, of those about or under the age of thirty-five." The door to the future of the Church is opening wide, and youth has been asked to enter.

The young people of America are more directly concerned of course with that branch of the International Missionary Council known as the Foreign Missions Conference of North America. This is a voluntary cooperative association of the Foreign Mission Boards of Canada and the United States. Organized in 1892, it is one of the earliest organizations carrying on cooperative activities among the denominations of America. There are now in affiliation with the Conference over ninety different missionary organizations. The Conference has appointed a Committee, known as the Committee on Reference and Counsel, through which the cooperating Boards are served efficiently and uninterruptedly through the year.

The following distinctive phases of the work thus done in the interests of Boards and societies at work in foreign mission lands may be enumerated: the management of problems arising out of the relations of our missionary movement to governments, not only to those of the United States and Canada, but to governments in all parts of the world; the study of questions relating to the cultivation of the churches at home with reference to their interest in foreign missions work and their support of it; the arrangement and conduct of an annual Conference of the Foreign Mission Boards of the United States and Canada, the reports of which are of increasing value to missionary administrators and to all students of missions; the study of the practical problems of missionary administration such as the preparation of missionary candidates, the training of missionaries during their earlier years on the field, the problems of Christian education in the mission field and the issuance of a readable body of Christian literature; the planning and conducting of general and group conferences such as the Missionary Convention which was held in Washington, D. C., in January, 1925, which called together five thousand people three times a day for a week to consider the subject of foreign missions; and the promotion of a missionary re-

search library the benefits of which are available to writers, missionaries, students in colleges and schools, and officers and executives of Mission Boards.

The Conference acts as the agent of the constituent Boards in times of great emergency. A sub-committee on Emergency and Reference is charged with the responsibility of prompt and energetic action under the stress of an unexpected need. Two notable instances of such an emergency were the disastrous earthquake in Japan in 1923 and the distressing circumstances in China during 1925. The Conference is concerned, also, with the growth of the indigenous Church on the mission field. Many other perplexing and difficult problems of missionary administration are being thoughtfully studied. The cooperative basis of the work being done not only enables each Board, large or small, to contribute to the united thinking and planning for these problems, but brings to it the benefit of a united judgment.

All sorts of incidental cooperation between the representatives of different missionary interests are being continually promoted by the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, until cooperation has become the natural order of procedure. This organization, through its central office, handles an enormous

volume of correspondence with all parts of the world and promotes innumerable investigations, all tending to draw mission forces into a unity of thought and action which means continuing and increased efficiency. Perhaps its largest contribution, however, has been its aid to a better understanding between denominational interests in North America. Through its friendly service there is today a better distribution of the forces at work on the different mission fields. These forces are thus enabled to reach a larger number of people and their organization is such as to avoid the overlapping of interests and to secure an efficient management of the many special concerns which modern methods have developed on the field. The missionary enterprise today has thus become one great friendly alliance.

Among the other interdenominational agencies carrying on work in the foreign missionary enterprise of the church are the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America, and the Committee on Co-operation in Latin America.

Constituent to the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America are twenty-seven Women's Boards of Foreign Missions in the United States and Canada. Altogether there are forty-four Boards and Socie-

ties that work together in this Federation. The character of its program has a moving humanitarian appeal. This organization is giving to the world a fresh and inspiring reinterpretation of the missionary enterprise in its relation to world peace, inter-racial relations and the industrialization of women and children.

The Federation is determined to do all within its power to "demobilize the mind of the world for war and mobilize it for peace." It promotes the study of books on peace and international relationships and seeks to develop a will-to-peace, particularly among the women of the world. It recognizes the fairness of the demand of native Chinese and the peoples of other races and of other flags for the removal of all those economic, political and commercial injustices that infringe on the rights of these respective nations. It would shape its missionary approach to these people in keeping with these new and changing conditions. In consistency with this position the Federation protests against the exclusion clauses of our immigration laws and calls for the removal of all racial discrimination in our naturalization policies.

The practical activities of this organization are determined with these larger purposes always in mind. The Central Committee for

the United Study of Foreign Missions acts as the Publication and Literature Committee of the Federation. Through its Committee on Interdenominational Institutions on the Foreign Field the Federation eliminates the wastes of competition and duplication in this very important phase of the missionary program. In this connection reference should be made to the Committee on Christian Literature for Women and Children on the Mission Field, which publishes in the language of the people many forms of literature for distribution among thousands of Christian converts. To insure a deeper understanding at home of the foreign missionary program of the church twenty-one Schools of Missions on Summer Conferences have affiliated with the Federation.

That this organization is keenly alive to the interdenominational students' movement of America is evidenced by the following recommendations which were adopted at that body's annual meeting at Atlantic City in January, 1926,

"That the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions of North America commend to the constituencies of the Foreign Mission Boards for their careful consideraton the report of the Commission on Foreign Missions of the Interdenominational Student Conference

held at Evanston, Ill., December 29th to January 1st, 1926.

"That in view of the interest the youth of our country is taking in world problems, the enthusiasm brought to the solution of these problems and the courage with which plans are carried out, more young people be placed on boards and other agencies of the Church, and be given more definite responsibilities in the local church."

The Committee on Cooperation in Latin America, organized some ten years ago, unifies the program for twenty-eight mission boards having work in Latin America. As in the case of most interdenominational bodies its functions are consultative and advisory, not legislative and mandatory. First place among the recent achievements of this Committee must be given to the holding of the Congress on Christian Work in South America, which met in Montevideo, March 29th to April 8th, 1925. A more detailed statement of the work and findings of this Congress will be given in subsequent paragraphs.

It is to be remembered, in the next place, that through this Committee an agreement has been reached by the constituent mission boards concerning the occupation of territory. In Mexico and Porto Rico this zone system in missionary

activity is best exemplified. In these territories each mission board has a very definite understanding as to its own area of responsibility. The task of evangelizing Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Paraguay, and Uruguay has been taken over entirely, in each case, by a single Board. This arrangement has strengthened mightily the evangelical forces in Latin America. Union educational institutions have been established in many centers. Literature of a very high order is being placed at the disposal of evangelicals and the general public. Translations of the best books are being made and a number of union book-stores are being organized. In this way the Latin Americans are being helped to the position where they can help themselves. An attempt is being made, through an Indian Commission, to bring the benefits of a Christian civilization to the ten million Indians who live in Latin America. Plans are now going forward for an interdenominational conference of evangelicals for the Caribbean Region which includes Mexico, Central America and the West Indies. Regional Committees have been set up throughout Latin America to assume the executive and administrative leadership for the cooperative effort in their own area. It is hoped that very soon each of these committees will be able to engage its

own executive secretary, a national if possible, who will be able to devote his entire time to the expanding duties of this office. Increasingly the responsibility for directing the life of the Evangelical Church in Mexico, Central and South America, is being placed in the hands of native workers. It is the adoption of this policy that has won for Protestantism in Latin America the undying gratitude and the willing cooperation of the governments of these several countries, particularly Mexico. Further reference to the work of this Committee will be made in a later discussion of the Montevideo Congress.

The Missionary Education Movement serves each one of these interdenominational missionary agencies through the publication of its textbooks on missionary education and the convening of conferences for the training of leaders. This movement grew out of a Conference held at Silver Bay on Lake George, N. Y., during the summer of 1902. It was there determined to organize a Young People's Missionary Movement. At first the activities of this Movement were devoted almost entirely to the missionary education of young people. It soon became evident however that missionary education must also extend to the children in one direction, and to the adults in the other; therefore, a few years

later the name of this organization was changed to the Missionary Education Movement.

As the Movement is now constituted it is strictly an organization of the Boards of Home and Foreign Missions of a large number of denominations in which these Boards cooperate to publish interdenominational missionary education literature and to hold summer conferences and other institutes for the training of workers in various forms of missionary education activity. In the United States fifteen different denominations are cooperating in the movement and each Board which makes a contribution to the budget nominates one or more members to the Board of Managers. This Board controls the budget of the Movement, decides what shall be published, authorizes territorial committees to conduct summer conferences, and in short, determines absolutely the activities of the Movement. The work of this organization has grown from a publication program consisting chiefly of bringing out an adult mission study book until today it offers a complete range of missionary educational material, both home and foreign, with graded courses for every age-group from primary to adult. It maintains a staff of educational experts who keep in touch with the latest developments in general pedagogy and strives to keep the publi-

cations of the organization thoroughly abreast with these movements. Summer conferences also aim to present to their people the latest approved methods of religious education with specific emphasis on developing these principles by means of missionary projects.

The united service made possible through the organizations referred to have resulted in a practical unity which has brought to the Churches of Christ in America a strength heretofore unrealized and a singleness of purpose that has made of Protestantism in our country a force to be reckoned with. How helpless the Churches would be to combat the sinister evils of our present day were it not for these organizations that amplify a thousand fold the voice of Christ as the call is made for a social and an international righteousness that shall measure up to those divine standards fixed by the fiat of eternal laws. Never before in the history of the Church have we witnessed such a stupendous effort to bring together the latent powers within these several communions for the benefit of each and all and for the coming of that day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea."

Concurrent with this Church cooperative movement in America there has been developing a very significant tendency toward the in-

ternal unification of many of these denominational bodies. Other proposals have been made within recent years which have contemplated an organic union among certain branches of Protestantism in the United States.

Perhaps the most recent effort to bring together divergent bodies within one of the strongest denominations was that which contemplated the unification of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. That the task of bringing these two communions into an organic fellowship with one another is now the liveliest issue of Methodism is itself an indication of the increased interest of those particular constituencies in the cause of Church union. Great enthusiasm attended the adoption of the proposed plan of unification by the Methodist Episcopal Church at its General Conference in 1924. While the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has delayed for the time being the consummation of this long looked for union there is every reason to believe that these two influential bodies of Methodism will be one in name and spirit within the not distant future.

Within the Lutheran Church there has been within the past decade a number of merging processes actively at work. Three Lutheran bodies were brought into an organic union in

1918, taking the name, the United Lutheran Church in America. During the previous year three synods of Norwegian Lutherans were combined to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America. Negotiations are now in progress for the further unification of a still larger number of these independent synodical bodies.

The organic union of the so-called Regular Baptists and the so-called Free Baptists has already been effected. In 1905 the Cumberland Presbyterian Church joined hands with the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Fifteen years later the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church was received into the larger fellowship of the Presbyterian General Assembly. Negotiations looking toward organic union have been carried on between the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (Northern), the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. (Southern), the United Presbyterian and the Reformed Church in the United States. Proposals for an approach toward organic union were drawn up in 1919 by a Conference of Episcopalians and Congregationalists, and signed by a number of distinguished churchmen representing both communions. "What we desire to see," said these signatories, "is not grudging concessions, but a willing acceptance of the treasures of each

for the common enrichment of the United Church." While this friendly overture has never been formally acted upon by the legislative bodies of the participating Churches it has deepened the conviction of many that organic unity is something more than a dream.

The Disciple Church, since 1910, has had as one of its nine national Boards, an Association for the Promotion of Christian Unity. This Association works in the closest harmony with the Federal Council of Churches. It sponsors friendly conferences between the church leaders of America, Europe and other parts of the world. Pentecost Sunday has been named by this Association as a day for the special consideration of themes bearing upon the problem of Christian unity. In the same year a Commission was appointed by the General Conference of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to make arrangements for a World Conference on Faith and Order, where the differences that now divide the Churches with regard to sacraments and orders might be discussed by Anglicans, Non-conformists and Roman Catholics. We shall refer in greater detail to this proposed conference in the chapter entitled, "Christian Unity—World Movements."

In 1920, on the invitation of the Committee on Church Cooperation and Union of the Pres-

byterian General Assembly, there was convened in Philadelphia a Conference on Organic Union. There was formulated at this Conference a Plan of Union for Evangelical Churches in the U. S. A. This Plan provided for the creation of a body to be known as the "United Churches of Christ in America." It was provided that each constituent Church would reserve the right to retain its own creedal statement. "In taking this step," declared the framers of this document, "we look forward with confident hope to that complete unity toward which we believe the Spirit of God is leading us." Even though this plan remains inoperative it indicates the strength of the many influences making for the organic union of the Protestant forces in the United States.

Those young people who are yearning for the nearer approach of a great United Church cannot but be heartened by this display of brotherliness between the several communions of our land. The growth of this conciliatory spirit and the development of this inter-church program have brought to the Christian people of America a fresh realization of the sin of disunion and a corresponding determination to make amends for the past by fashioning in future years a Church that shall be truly One. That the tendency of history is moving in the

direction of an organic fellowship among the Churches there can be no doubt. We have seen on the one hand a vast cooperative movement among the denominations, heading up in the Federal Council of Churches and numerous affiliated, consultative and cooperative bodies. We have seen on the other hand gratifying evidences within many of the denominations of a desire for the healing of internal divisions, and a reaching out for that peace of the spirit which shall bring all faiths into a united comradeship with Christ. Despite the theological quarrelling of today, despite the bitterness that at times flares up between the fundamentalists and the modernists, despite the boastful arrogance of those who still regard themselves as God's chosen few, it yet remains true that deep down in the soul of every communion there is a desire for the reunion of Christendom.

And the American Churches are not alone in this crusade for Christian unity. Doubtless influenced by the achievements of the Federal Council of Churches, other communions in other lands have set up their own interdenominational federations and are now carrying on a ministry of personal and social evangelism that is all the more remarkable in view of the many discouragements under which these efforts are being made. In other countries, too,

the movement toward organic union is gaining strength and Christians everywhere are talking as never before of the conditions under which they shall be able in the future to pray and worship together. An understanding of the larger aspects of this problem will further strengthen the youth of America in their conviction that the Church of which they dream can and will be established.

Chapter 7

CHRISTIAN UNITY—IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The map of the world is dotted here and there with an interdenominational federation of Christian forces for practical purposes. There was no other way for the Churches to meet the moral exigencies that followed in the aftermath of the war. The beneficial by-products of that great catastrophe have been few in number but the religious leaders of the world have been made to see as a result of that conflict that extinction and eternal disgrace will most certainly overtake them unless they stand together as Christian brothers for the reshaping of civilization and the reconstituting of human society. Helpless in their divisions the Churches of Christ in many countries have literally worked themselves into a religious partnership for practical service. It is doubtful if that partnership will ever be dissolved. The cost of disunion would be spiritual bankruptcy. The only course left open to the Churches of the world is some form of union. It is either that or the shame of another defeat to be followed inevitably by the processes of disintegration.

Like spiritual giants the leaders of the

Church have arisen from the ruins of yesterday, determined to build anew and in a way that will help them overcome the manifold influences of a devastating materialism. The result has been an interdenominational federating of moral and religious forces closely paralleling the cooperative endeavors of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. While a number of these federated Church bodies were organized in pre-war days it was not until they were confronted with the gigantic tasks of post-war reconstruction that they really sensed their oneness in life and work. The story of this spiritually unifying process as it has made its way around the world will be of great interest to the young people who have seen the vision of the Universal Church.

In England there are two interdenominational bodies, the National and the Federal Councils of the Evangelical Free Churches. Local councils of these organizations are scattered throughout the empire and men and women high in the civil and parliamentarian life of England participate in their discussions and activities. In Germany there is the German Evangelical Church Federation, in which the provincial church bodies within the Republic as well as the denominations as such are brought into a federated unity. This is a very

significant development in view of the fact that German Protestantism represents the greatest single factor of Evangelical Christianity in Europe. The Protestant population of Switzerland has evolved a very strong and influential Federation with its central headquarters in Zurich. Now the center of the political re-organization of the world, Switzerland is likely to become the center for the consolidation of Europe's religious and moral forces.

In both Australia and New Zealand there are strong federation movements in progress. In the former country there is in each state a Church council in which representatives of all the churches meet together for common communion and common action on matters pertaining to the social and moral life of the Commonwealth. In New Zealand there is the Council of Christian Congregations which includes in its working personnel representatives of both the Anglican and Non-conformist groups. In both of these countries there is a growing conviction among church administrators that the next step will be in the perfecting of an organization similar to the Federal Council of Churches. A constitution of Federal Union has been drawn up in Czecho-Slovakia that will bring together for purposes of practical service the evangelical churches of that

country. The introductory clause of that constitution affirms the spiritual Oneness of all Christians in Christ. Even Belgium is not without its inter-church agency. The Federation of Protestant Churches of Belgium, with its headquarters in Brussels, is doing an heroic piece of work in federating the scattered remnants of the evangelical movement in that country. In Ireland there is the United Council of Christian Churches and Religious Communions, in Spain the Federation of the Evangelical Churches and in Sweden the Federal Council of Evangelical Free Churches in Sweden.

We have already referred to the Central Bureau for the Relief of the Evangelical Churches in Europe. Although the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America was the prime mover in the organization of the Bureau and two of its secretaries give most of their time to its work, the Central Bureau is separately constituted and directed by an executive committee with headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland. The following aims have been laid down to determine the future functioning of this organization:

"To organize on an international and inter-denominational basis relief work for the suffer-

ing Protestant Churches and Institutions in Europe.

"To further cooperative relations between the existing relief agencies in order to avoid overlapping and injustice.

"To be a clearing house for information.

"To study the best methods for solving the constructive tasks with which European Protestantism as a whole is confronted.

"To stimulate in the Protestant Churches a larger interest and a feeling of deeper responsibility for each other.

"To further thus the spiritual solidarity of Christian Churches."

In line with the broad range of these responsibilities the Central Bureau is forging ahead. It is rendering to the Churches constituent to it a service of Samaritan friendliness and relief that is absolutely unparalleled in the long history of European Protestantism. One of its chief concerns is the development of new leadership for the Churches. The economic stress in Europe has had as one of its results a serious falling off in the number of candidates for the Christian ministry. The Bureau is attempting to meet this situation by the provision of scholarships and fellowships for theological students. In order to widen the outlook of its future leaders this organization is endeavoring to send a number of ministerial recruits abroad

so that these students may bring back to their own land and to their own Church new ideas and fresh inspiration. The Central Bureau is increasingly being regarded as the natural agency through which all the cooperative work of the Churches of Europe should be done.

The Churches, in taking upon themselves the task of outlawing war, have, by indirection at least, popularized the cause of Christian unity. If the Churches, remaining apart, could not stop the last war they cannot without coming closer together teach the nations the arts of peace. The Churches have been slow to learn this lesson but they are learning it. The World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches was the organization created in 1914 at Constance, Germany, to make sure that the weight of a united Christendom should "be brought to bear upon the relations of governments and peoples to the end that the spirit of peace and goodwill may prevail, and that there be substituted arbitration for war in the settlement of international disputes; friendship in place of suspicion and hate; co-operation instead of ruinous competition; and a spirit of service and sacrifice rather than that of greed and gain in all transactions between the nations."

It was agreed on that occasion that "in as-

much as all sections of the Church of Christ are equally concerned in the maintenance of peace and the promotion of good feeling among the races of the world, it is advisable for them to act in concert in their efforts to bring it about." The church forces of America, of Europe, of the Near and Far East have sworn to cease fighting among themselves. They are determined that henceforth they shall conserve their strength for the more worthy end of promoting international goodwill. We see here another aspect of the closer unification of the Churches. National Councils of the World Alliance have been created in America, France, Norway, Holland, Hungary, Turkey, Japan, Italy, Finland, Germany, Poland, Belgium, Great Britain, Sweden, Estonia, Bulgaria, Denmark, Switzerland, Greece, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Portugal, Lettland, Serb-Croat-Slovene State, and in China. The preachers and pastors of Christ in these many countries, challenged by the high ideals of this organization, have become flaming evangelists of peace on earth. The World Alliance has strengthened the Church federation movement in each of the countries in which it is represented. It has promoted a feeling of spiritual kinship between the Greek Orthodox Church and the Christianity of the West. It has helped to make possible such gatherings as

the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work, and is just now planning for still other international get-togethers of Christians.

While not a Church organization it must be reaffirmed that the World's Student Christian Federation, organized in Vadstena, Sweden, in 1895, has, by the very nature of its program, advanced the cause of Church union in many countries. Everywhere this Federation has cultivated a sense of loyalty to Christ and to His Church. But the Church to which these students have been asked to give their lives is a Universal Church, a Church that is truly One with Christ, a Church that is too holy to be sectarian. Out of the fellowship of this inter-confessional student movement there have come many leaders who today are preaching the gospel of a united church.

It would be quite impossible to overstate the very significant contributions which have been made to the development of this inter-church consciousness by such international Christian movements as The Near East Relief, The American Friends Service Committee, the Bible Societies, The World's Christian Endeavor Union, and The World's Sunday School Association. Each of these organizations, in its own way, has become a link in the chain that is being forged upon the anvils of

God and by means of which those people who call themselves Christian are being drawn closer to one another and closer to God.

It is in the missionary enterprise of the Church that some of the more remarkable advances have been made toward the attainment of church union. It is to this phase of the situation that we shall now turn our attention.

In China, India and Japan this interdenominational missionary leaven is at work. National Christian Councils have been organized in each of these countries and the program being advanced through these cooperating agencies is attracting the attention of the entire ecclesiastical world. The International Missionary Council prepared the way in these Eastern countries for this extraordinary growth of the inter-church movement. In India the National Missionary Conference became, in 1922, the National Christian Council. One of the most far reaching of the changes implicit in this reorganization process was the more definite relating of the Indian Churches to the administrative and executive responsibilities of missionary endeavor. Native Churches and foreign missions are thus linked together in an enduring bond of mutual service. The Indian Christian Council is made up of members appointed by the ten Provincial Councils of

Madras, Bengal and Assam, Bihar and Orissa, Bombay, Mid-India, the United Provinces, the Panjab, Burma, Ceylon, and the Telugu Christian Council. Among its objects as set forth in the Constitution are the following: "To help to co-ordinate the activities of the Provincial Councils and to assist them to cooperate with each other when such cooperation is desirable. Through common consultation to help to form Christian public opinion and bring it to bear on the moral and social problems of the day." It is the duty of the secretaries of this organization "to assist Churches and missions when desired in considering and carrying out plans for co-ordination of work and for practical cooperation in higher education, theological education, the training of teachers and village education, and to foster and help to coordinate the production of Christian literature.

The following committees function through the National Council: Literature, Survey, Preparation of Missionaries, Simplification of Script, Christian Education, Theological Education, Matters Affecting Alien Missionaries and Public Questions such as the suppression of the opium traffic. The official publications of the Council are read in all parts of India, Burma and Ceylon. The bringing together of these many Christian influences throughout the

vast empire of India is strengthening the spiritual life of the people and is making of the religion of Jesus Christ a factor of tremendous significance in the progressive development of that nation. The National Christian Council of India seems to have been born for such a time as this. Through its ministry both Moslems and Hindus are being wooed and won to the gospel of the Son of the Living God.

The Chinese Christian Council, which came into being in May, 1922, is organized in a way very similar to the Indian Council. The denominational delegates to this body are appointed on the basis of communicants. Affiliated with the Chinese Christian Council are the missionary groups of the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. Other societies identified with the Council include the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, numerous Bible Societies, the China Inland Mission, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Seventh Day Adventists and a large number of Chinese independent Churches. It will be seen at a glance that the Council is representative of the various religious forces of the Chinese nation. The regularly appointed delegates of the churches and other religious bodies on the

Council total one hundred members, a majority of whom must be Chinese nationals. As in India the Chinese Council does its work through a number of committees including those on Retreats and Evangelism, International Relations, Industrial and Social Problems, Rural Problems, Anti-Narcotic Activities, Christian Literature, Indigenous Church and Religious Education.

The objectives of the Council are: "To foster and express the fellowship and unity of the Christian Church in China and the realization of its Oneness with the Church throughout the world, and to provide an opportunity for united prayer and corporate thought toward this end; to consider the needs of China on a nationwide basis and plan for the evangelization and uplift of the whole nation; to help promote such mutual acquaintance between the leaders, both Chinese and missionary, from all over China and from all denominations as will create an atmosphere of respect and confidence and make cooperative work of all kinds, and union wherever possible, seem natural, feasible and desirable; to provide a platform upon which representatives of Churches, missions, departmental organizations and other Christian agencies may discuss and plan for the correlation of the activities of the Christian forces throughout China;

to serve as a means by which the Christian forces in China may express themselves unitedly when they so desire upon great moral and other issues; to encourage every healthy movement of the Church that leads to full autonomy, and to seek and work for the adaptation of the Church to its environment and for its naturalization in China at as early a date as practicable."

With the present anti-Christian movement in full swing in China it is a very fortunate thing for the Christian Church that the Council is able, in this interdenominational manner, to promote the spread of the gospel of love among the four hundred million people of that distant empire.

The membership of the Japan National Council includes representatives from the Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, United Christian, Friends, Methodist Protestant, United Brethren, Evangelical, Christian and Fukuin Lutheran Churches, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Sunday School Association, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Educational Association, the American and British Bible Societies and the Omi Mission. A number of strong committees have been insti-

tuted by the Japanese Council for the promotion of peace and international goodwill, the suppression of prostitution and the traffic in opium, the issuing of Christian literature and the training of nationals for positions of responsibility in the evangelical and educational undertakings of the Christian Church. Through these and other activities the National Christian Council is making for itself a place of great moral and spiritual influence in the life of the Japanese people. In Japan there is also a Church Federation.

On the African continent there is the Congo Protestant Council with headquarters at Kinshasa. In Germany there was organized in 1922 the German Evangelical Missionary Union. In Holland five of the missionary societies have effected a joint organization, while in the Scandinavian countries there will be found the Northern Missionary Council with subsidiary branches in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland.

In South America the Committee on Co-operation in Latin America has succeeded in bringing into the evangelical movement a sense of unity that would have been regarded as quite impossible only a few short years ago. The Congress on Christian Work in South America, held in Montevideo in 1925, was an interde-

nominational gathering of the Protestant forces of these Spanish speaking people. The thought of cooperation in Christian service was uppermost in the mind of the delegates as the discussions of that congress continued. The Report on Cooperation and Unity submitted to the members of that Congress closed with these words:

"Interdenominational and international co-operation is possible only when men or groups trust one another and have in their central loyalty to Christ a bond of union stronger than any of the tendencies toward division.

"The problems which these advanced steps involve in the field of interdenominational action are not different in kind from those which exist inside each denomination. Interdenominational trust and unity rest on the same principles as intradenominational trust and unity. They all evolve one simple problem: Can the diversity of the body be preserved in the unity of the Head for an aggressive service for humanity?

"This is the challenge faced by the Montevideo Congress."

Among the Findings of the Congress was one which urged that a common name be given to the evangelical Churches in South America. "The Congress advises that the Churches should be known under a common name, the de-

nominational name being placed in a parenthesis following, so that the name would read 'The Evangelical Church of Brazil (Presbyterian)', 'The Evangelical Church of Brazil (Methodist).' " Putting denominational titles in parentheses would seem to indicate that the cause of Church union was making rapid progress in South America.

In still other countries under the direction of the International Missionary Council, there have been held a number of epoch making conferences in Northern Africa and Western Asia which have strengthened the interdenominational approach to the problems of world evangelism. In the Spring of 1924 a group of Christian workers among Moslems met at Constantine in Algeria, another group met in Helouan near Cairo, and still another group convened at Brummana near Beirut. Out of these conferences there emerged a still more significant gathering of the outstanding Christian leaders from these respective areas in the historic city of Jerusalem. There, in that country where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, where the star was first seen announcing to all the world the birth of a loving Saviour, in that country whose hills and valleys had been sanctified by the footsteps of the Master, there it was that plans were drawn up for the formation

of a Christian Council for Western Asia and Northern Africa.

And so it goes. From East to West, from North to South, the Churches of Christ are coming together. They have seen the folly of separatism, the tragedy of division. They have felt the thrill of a new life and of added strength as they have prayed and worked together. Never again will these churches lapse backward into that pre-war discord for which they have been so rightly condemned. The churches of the world have turned the corner. Behind them lie competition, misunderstanding and dissension. Before them lies the sunnier prospect of cooperation, internal peace and an unbroken fellowship.

As in America, so in other countries, these federated movements among the evangelical Churches are being supplemented by other tendencies which aspire to the more difficult task of accomplishing the organic unity of these several communions.

The classic pronouncement on the possible reunion of Christendom was the "Appeal to all Christian People," issued by the Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican communion, assembled in conference at Lambeth Palace, August, 1920. "We believe," said these bishops, "that God wills fellowship. By God's

own act this fellowship was made in and through Jesus Christ, and its life is in His Spirit. We believe that it is God's purpose to manifest this fellowship, so far as this world is concerned, in an outward, visible and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognized officers, using God-given means of grace, and inspiring all its members to the world-wide service of the Kingdom of God. This is what we mean by the Catholic Church."

And again, "The vision which rises before us is that of a Church, genuinely Catholic, loyal to all Truth, and gathering into its fellowship all 'who profess and call themselves Christians,' within whose visible unity all the treasures of faith and order, bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present, shall be possessed in common, and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ. Within this unity Christian Communions now separated from one another would retain much that has long been distinctive in their methods of worship and service. It is through a rich diversity of life and devotion that the unity of the whole fellowship will be fulfilled."

What a wonderful vision! The present generation of youth is truly grateful that it lives in this hour and is permitted to share in this vision. The Christian young people of the world hail

this pronouncement with genuine thanksgiving. They add their prayers to those of their elders that the Universal Church of believers in Christ may finally come into being.

The issuance of the Lambeth Appeal had the very happy result of riveting the attention of the whole religious world upon the question of Church union. This Appeal did not underestimate the wide and very vital differences of opinion that still obtain among many of the branches of the Church with regard to sacraments, orders and other doctrinal and administrative matters. But it did give multitudes of Christian people to believe that if they prayed and labored with sufficient faith the barriers created by these differences of opinion would some day be removed.

In Great Britain a Joint Committee of representatives of the Church of England and the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches was appointed to confer on the aspects of reunion as set forth in the Lambeth Appeal. The first report of this Joint Committee was made in 1922. Further deliberations were felt to be desirable and the work of the Committee was continued. A second report has only recently been issued. Five major questions were raised by the Free Churches in this report. They were inquiries regarding the nature of

the "representative and Constitutional" episcopate, which had tentatively been set forth by the Anglican bishops as a basis of agreement on the matter of orders; the status of the existing Free Church Ministry; the relation of the Free Churches to Communions with which they are in fellowship in other parts of the world; the problems connected with the Union between Church and State; and the safeguarding of the Evangelical principles of the Reformation.

Serious questions, these. They are not to be lightly regarded nor irreverently discarded. But in approaching the problems implicit in these inquiries we recall the language contained in the Preliminary Statement of the final Report of the Joint Committee, a statement signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Moderator of the Federal Council, a statement which voices the confidence that "In a field of inevitable controversy we have, by the Blessing of God, attained a much larger measure of agreement than was thought by most people to be possible when our Conference began nearly four years ago. Much still remains to be considered, and ample time is required during which the questions we have carefully debated and the provisional conclusions we have reached will afford matter for

prayer and thought and converse in the wider circles of our friends at home and overseas."

There the matter stands today. The Anglican and Free Churches are nearer together at this moment than at any time since the Reformation. And they are nearer together not because either has sacrificed anything of truth but because both are willing to pray together. The next step will be taken at the forthcoming World Conference on Faith and Order which meets in Lausanne in 1927, and to which further references will be made in the following chapter.

In many other quarters the movement for organic union is getting under headway. For the past ten years there has been a steady advance toward the organic union of the Methodist bodies in Great Britain. At the 1926 Conference of the British Wesleyan Methodists a resolution was adopted favoring union with the Primitive Methodists and the United Methodists. The vote on this resolution was decisive. At this same Conference a committee was appointed to "report on the possibilities of closer cooperation with a view to union with other churches and especially with the Presbyterian Churches."

The Presbyterian communions of Scotland are vibrant with hopes for a united Church.

There are none of those perplexing problems of faith and order to obstruct the progress of the union movement in Scotland. Theologically, the Free Church minister is quite at home in the pulpit of the Church of Scotland. The divisions within Scottish Presbyterianism are premised upon conflicting interpretations of administration and organization. The Free Churches have always maintained that the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Scotland was essential to union. For a long time, too, the Free Churches were regarded as "truants" by the Established Church. But a more conciliatory spirit has been at work in both of these Churches for a number of years. The present move toward union was begun in 1907 and in 1909 a Joint Conference of the two communions was convened. The "Memorandum" of 1911 went a long way in satisfying the demand of the Free Churchmen for disestablishment. It was stated in that document that the "Church must formulate for herself her claims to independence in matters spiritual and her definition of her liberties." It was also affirmed that "all statutes affecting the Church were to be repealed so far as inconsistent with the Articles declaratory of the Church's freedom." By 1919 this position was accepted by both factions as a possible basis of union. The

Church of Scotland Property and Endowment Act of 1925 removed one of the major obstacles to union. This Act gives to the Church of Scotland a large measure of self-autonomy. As has been said the Church of Scotland is now "mistress in her own house." The responsibility for maintaining the Church is now up to the congregation. The Church itself is in undisputed possession of the property used by it. It has become in effect an "autonomous communion." That is why there is such an element of expectancy in Scotland at the present time. The prospect for union is brighter than ever before.

In Australia the merging of the Presbyterian bodies has been completed. The same is true of the Methodist groups, so that we have in that country among church leaders a strong presumption in favor of union. As long ago as 1903 a Proposed Basis of Union was drawn up which contemplated the uniting of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches. This Basis of Union was endorsed by very significant majorities in the case of the Methodists and Congregationalists. The non-union minority within the Presbyterian Church is still sufficiently strong to make inadvisable any hurried consummation of this merging process. Negotiations have been suspended for the present but the eventual coming of the

United Church of Australia cannot permanently be delayed.

There is also a definite stirring of interest in the negotiations which are now in progress for union between the Anglican Church and the South India United Churches (Presbyterian and Congregational, English and American). The joint committee of these bodies has already held three meetings and the conclusions arrived at indicate that the situation there is full of promise. A tentative understanding has been reached regarding the historic episcopate. It is proposed that the office shall be duly recognized but that no particular theory concerning the nature of the episcopate shall be required. The office of bishop is to be constitutionalized, that is, the bishop is to exercise the functions of his office in accordance with a written constitution. The foundation is being laid there for a broad interpretation of the sacraments. The thought of those working for unification in India is not for a rigid and inelastic uniformity but for a unity that is to be achieved despite individual differences of opinion. While the reports of the joint committee have not been formally considered by either party to the negotiations it remains true that a phenomenal advance has been made within recent years to heal the schisms of the Church in India.

On June 10, 1925, there came into existence the United Church of Canada. The world at large acclaimed this union of the Methodist, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches of the Dominion as one of the most outstanding and truly significant events in the entire history of the Christian Church. Ecclesiastical leaders in many countries, the church press of many denominations and the public generally seemed to see in that event a forecast of the future. The Basis of Union which later became the instrument of coalition had been prepared by a Joint Committee on Church Union representing the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the General Conference of the Methodist Church and the Congregational Union of Canada and subsequently approved by each of these bodies. The Twenty Articles of Doctrine are somewhat involved, as doctrinal matters generally are, but they set forth Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone of the foundation upon which they are determined to build for the future. The unit of organization for the United Church is the Pastoral Charge while the governing bodies or courts of the Church are the Presbytery, the Conference and the General Council. This latter body meets every second year and its presiding officer is the chief executive administrator of the Church. In this Council there is

vested the power to legislate on matters pertaining to doctrinal worship, membership, and government of the Church. Notwithstanding the defection of a comparatively small number of Presbyterian Churches the United Church has given ample evidence of its staying qualities. Its future is full of promise.

The spirit of religious fellowship is winging its way around the world. The real inner unity of the spirit is spreading itself like a mantle of peace over the Christian Church. The disciples of Christ are sensing their spiritual kinship. They are building as never before upon Christ who is the Church's one foundation.

Chapter 8

CHRISTIAN UNITY—WORLD MOVEMENTS.

We have been discussing the manner in which this growing consciousness of spiritual unity has been manifesting itself in the life of the Church in America, England, Canada, Europe, South America and in the Near and Far East. In a relatively short time the issue of Church union has found its way into the hearts and into the prayers of Christians the world over. Never before have so many people been yearning for the return of Christendom to that unity for which Christ so fervently prayed. The manner in which these divided disciples of our common Lord have come to feel their need of one another and their desire to worship at a common altar is indeed a miracle. Christ has stretched forth his hand over the troubled waters of our denominational life and there has emerged from the storm of our conflicting creeds the calm of a great and noble purpose, to find in Him the way toward a never ending reconciliation.

The Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work that was held in Stockholm during

the summer of 1925 furnished dramatic evidence of this deep stirring among the Christians of these many countries for Church union. It was here demonstrated that the issue of Christian unity had become the concern of the churches internationally. As far back as 1916 the Federal Council of Churches had issued a call for the convening of such a conference. Plans for the proposed gathering began to take shape in 1919, when, at the call of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, a large and representative gathering of Christian leaders were brought together in Holland. The following year, in Geneva, an International Committee was appointed to assume the executive and administrative responsibility for the forthcoming conference.

A resolution was adopted at that time which declared that the time had come for "an Ecumenical Conference of different Christian Communions to consider the urgent practical tasks before the Church at this time and the possibility of cooperation in testimony and action." This conference was to be something more than the voluntary coming together of self-appointed individuals. Its membership was to consist of the officially appointed delegates of the several participating communions. It was determined that the discussions of the conference should

center around the following six subjects: The Church's Obligation in View of God's Purpose for the World, The Church and Economic and Industrial Problems, The Church and Social and Moral Problems, The Church and International Relations, The Church and Christian Education, and Methods of Cooperative and Federative Efforts by the Christian Communions.

It will be seen at a glance that this contemplated agenda very closely paralleled the type of program embodied in the Federal Council of Churches. Commissions were appointed in 1922 to make an exhaustive survey of these varied phases of the life and work of the Church. The reports of these Commissions were submitted to the International Committee. For ten days prior to the opening of the Conference this Committee revised and edited these reports and made them ready for discussion purposes.

And then, on the morning of August 19, 1925, there assembled in Stockholm, Sweden, six hundred and ten delegates from forty-four different countries, representing one hundred and three denominational bodies of thirty-one communions with a total membership of more than three hundred and forty-five million Christians. All branches of historical Christianity,

with the exception of the Roman Catholic, were represented at this interdenominational love feast of Christians. The delegates had come together from the ends of the earth. Here again, as at Geneva in 1920, the Eastern Orthodox Churches officially related themselves, for conference purposes, to the Protestant Churches.

The opening service of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was held in the Storkyrkan Cathedral. It was an occasion never to be forgotten. Led by the king and queen of Sweden the procession of State and Church dignitaries marched in quiet reverence toward the great altar. Following the royal party there came the patriarchs and metropolitans of the Eastern Orthodox Church. There then followed in turn the bishops and other representatives of the Church of England, the representatives of the Non-conformist group, the Lutherans of Germany, the Protestant church leaders of France and other European countries, and finally, the ambassadors of the Churches of Christ in America. With but a single purpose these followers of the Cross moved toward the altar. The prayer breathed by each and all was that God might work through them the miracle of reconciliation; that in the name of their common Christ, they might

go forth in apostolic humility to bring back a truant world to the house of God. The multitudes that thronged the temple then lifted up their voices to sing. It was a song the echoes of which must still be reverberating through the hills of eternity. The hymnal had been translated in five different languages and each in his own tongue sang that stirring hymn of Christian unity "The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord." It was a solemn hour. For nearly two thousand years the world had been waiting for just such an occasion, Christians breaking bread with one another irrespective of their creedal differences. The question raised on every hand was this: "If such fellowship among Christians is possible for a limited period of ten days in Stockholm, why is not the same fellowship possible forever and in all parts of the world?" That question is being answered, and in the right way.

For ten days these six hundred and ten delegates debated the problems of the world from the point of view of a Christian statesmanship. The Message to the Churches, which was adopted at the final session of the conference, lacked many of the elements which the more aggressive and liberal minded delegates would like to have had incorporated in such a document. There was a surprising degree of

unanimity regarding the fundamentals of the social gospel. The Message just referred to declared, "We have in the presence of the Cross accepted the urgent duty of applying His gospel in all realms of human life—industrial, social, political and international. . . . We have declared that the soul is the supreme value, and that it must not be subordinated to the rights of property or to the mechanism of industry, and that it may claim as its first right the right to salvation. Therefore we contend for the free and full development of the human personality. In the name of the Gospel we have affirmed that industry should not be based solely on the desire for individual profit, but that it should be conducted for the service of the community. Property should be regarded as a stewardship for which an account must be given to God. Cooperation between capital and labor should take the place of conflict, so that employers and employed alike may be enabled to regard their part in industry as the fulfillment of a vocation. Thus alone can we obey our Lord's command to do unto others even as we would they should do unto us. . . ."

"We have also set forth the guiding principles of a Christian internationalism, equally opposed to a national bigotry and a weak cosmopolitanism. We have affirmed the universal

character of the Church, and its duty to preach and practice the love of the brethren. We have considered the relation of the individual conscience to the State. We have examined the race problem, the subject of law and arbitration, and the constitution of an international order which would provide peaceable methods for removing the causes of war—questions which in the tragic conditions of today make so deep an appeal to our hearts. We summon the Churches to share with us our sense of the horror of war, and of its futility as a means of settling international disputes, and to pray and work for the fulfillment of the promise that under the sceptre of the Prince of Peace, ‘mercy and truth shall meet together, righteousness and peace shall kiss each other.’”

Such was the gospel preached at Stockholm. For the first time it was being officially declared that the gospel of Christ was to be made sovereign in every phase of human activity.

The results achieved at Stockholm were not, however, registered in resolutions. Something far more important than that took place, namely, the rediscovery and reaffirmation of the spiritual solidarity of the human race. The gains made at Stockholm were chiefly psychological. They were for that reason the more permanent and promising. The germ of an abiding eternal truth was fertilized in the soul of every delegate, the truth that God’s purpose

for His children is a universal fellowship manifesting itself in an inner spiritual unity and in an outward reconstruction of the social order in conformity with the mandates of the Sermon on the Mount. That was the effulgent and transforming glory of the Universal Christian Conference.

With the establishment of that inner, spiritual communion between the Churches represented at Stockholm there followed a clearer and more intelligent appreciation of the larger tasks that remain to be solved by the disciples of Christ. By some providential leading the churchmen assembled at Stockholm were led into the rare wisdom of laying spiritual foundations for the building of a spiritual kingdom. That is to say, before the Churches are able to work together for the common good of humanity, they must understand one another. Each must be able to appreciate and appraise in all fairness the motives and aspirations of the other. That process of mutual understanding was well begun at Stockholm. There were severe differences of opinion at times. These differences were frankly and honestly stated. The great war had not been entirely forgotten, which is not in the least surprising. The memory of that conflict had produced a scepticism that demanded a hearing. There was some

doubt expressed as to the possibilities of international friendship being secured under existing circumstances. These difficulties had to be faced before a mutual understanding was possible. When we once get the other man's point of view we are in a position to proceed rationally toward a given end.

We now understand what the German churchmen are thinking about. We have a clearer understanding of what the French churchmen regard as the minimum requirement of international goodwill. We have heard spokesmen for the British, American and Eastern churches express their reactions to the problems of European and international peace. That process of diagnosing each other's mind and heart is not always pleasant but the Churches of Christ are probing deeply. They seek a cure for the ills of the world. In the deeper spiritual fellowship and wider mutual understanding accomplished at Stockholm the necessary preparations were made and the foundations laid for an unprecedented labor of love on an international scale. The application of Christ's gospel to industry, the infusion of His purposes in educational processes, the introduction of His spirit into international relations, and the recognition of His lordship in the social and moral realm, were, as we have seen, the

high purposes to which the conference dedicated itself with unrestrained enthusiasm.

Then again the conviction was strengthened at Stockholm that the accomplishment of these purposes will remain impossible so long as the Church of Christ is divided. It was out of the travail of dissension and discord that the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was born. The actual coming together of that conference, after years of careful preparation, only confirmed the belief that the salvaging of civilization demands as one of its preliminary essentials the reunion of Christendom. That is the starting point from which this large world evangelism must proceed. Realizing this to be true the delegates attending this conference declared in their Message to the Churches: "This has proved the most signal instance of fellowship and cooperation, across the boundaries of nations and confessions, which the world has yet seen. The sins and sorrows, the struggles and losses of the great war and since, have compelled the Christian Churches to recognize, humbly and with shame, that 'the world is too strong for a divided church.' Leaving for the time our differences in faith and order, our aim has been to secure united practical action in Christian life and work." And again, "May we not hope that through the work of this body,

and through the increasing fellowship and co-operation of the Christians of all nations in the one Spirit, our oneness in Christ may be more and more revealed to the world in life and work. Only as we become inwardly one shall we attain real unity of mind and spirit. The nearer we draw to the Crucified, the nearer we come to one another, in however varied colours the Light of the World may be reflected in our faith. Under the Cross of Christ we reach out hands to one another." It begins to look as though the Churches of the world would finally be weaned away from their sectionalism in the accomplishment of a lasting union.

Before adjournment the Conference appointed a Continuation Committee the personnel of which had been nominated by the delegates of the American, British, European and Eastern Orthodox Sections. Representatives were also chosen from Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, South America, Near East and South Africa. All together there are sixty-seven members of this Committee and they have assumed the following duties:

"First, to perpetuate and strengthen the spirit of fellowship which this Conference so happily exemplifies.

"Second, to publish the proceedings of the Conference in official and also in popular form.

"Third, to carry on the work of the Conference, and to consider how far and in what ways its practical suggestions may be made operative.

"Fourth, to gather information regarding the methods of cooperation among the churches in the various countries for the objects which are the concern of the Conference, to counsel with them as to methods of closer international cooperation, to do what may be found wise to facilitate the formation of such agencies in countries where they do not now exist, and to issue from time to time such publications as will serve to keep the Churches informed regarding the work of the Committee and such other matters as are germane to the purposes for which the Committee exists.

"Fifth, to consider the practicability of holding another Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work at some future date."

In keeping with this five-fold purpose a number of Commissions have been named to study and report to the Continuation Committee on the following subjects: Cooperation with youth, Cooperation with industrial workers and experts, Cooperation between the Churches and teachers and theological professors.

If one ventured a criticism of the Stockholm Conference it would be directed at the meager

recognition accorded the young manhood and womanhood of the Christian Church. The whole movement for Christian unity will not be consummated during the life time of the adult leaders who have given so magnificently of their labor and life for this holy cause. The larger purposes of this Conference will not be achieved until these leaders have passed into that perfect unity enfolded within the providence of eternity. It is imperative therefore that those who are yet young shall be permitted to serve their apprenticeship for this cause through an active participation in the preparations for and deliberations of such international gatherings. These younger groups cannot, without grave peril to the Kingdom of God, be any longer neglected in this manner. Already our young people are frankly suspicious. Whether rightly or wrongly they have come to believe that the organized Church, in its larger aspects, is determined to function without them. To allay that suspicion and to establish a world wide comradeship among the youth of every land the Continuation Committee created at Stockholm would serve God in a handsome way by opening wide the door to the eager and loyal spirit of youth.

This criticism was made vocal on more than one occasion during the Conference sessions.

And it bore fruit. In the Message to the Churches we find this very significant paragraph: "We turn to the young of all countries. With keen appreciation we have heard of their aspirations and efforts for a better social order as expressed in the youth movements of many lands. We desire to enlist the ardour and energy of youth, the freshness and fullness of their life, in the service of the Kingdom of God and of humanity."

Subsequently it was voted by the Continuation Committee that a special commission should be created to secure the help of youth in all countries for the purpose of carrying out the objectives of the Life and Work Conference. The writer was accorded the honor of being named as a member of this Commission. It has now become the duty of the young people of the world to catch the torch passed on to them by these elder princes of the Church. No more splendid opportunity to mold the life of the Church has ever been given to youth than that here given them to cooperate with this Commission for the fulfillment of the noble purposes to which the Stockholm Conference was dedicated. Youth has knocked and the door has been opened. May God give to these youthful crusaders of the Cross the courage to enter!

The Universal Christian Conference on Life

and Work was concerned primarily with matters of conduct. It did not enter into the realm of theology. Neither did it debate the nature of the Church, nor the authority of the ministry, nor the place of sacraments as an aid to worship. The delegates who had gathered at Stockholm were of the opinion that agreement on questions of life and work must antedate agreement on matters of faith and order. They were met together convinced that if they could only find some way to work together they could then worship together. They believed that if Christians could only be persuaded to lay aside their intellectual differences long enough to employ their resources and energies in a common drive against the paganism of our modern life then the differences of faith and order which now divide the Church so lamentably would become less and less acute and would finally be made to yield to the logic of service. "Let us work together," said these churchmen at Stockholm, "and in thus working together we shall be led into that spiritual fellowship and inner unity which Christ purchased for us with his own life and death."

It is not hard to be convinced of the merits of this position. It has happened more than once that when Christians of different churches and of conflicting creeds labored together in

dead earnest for the accomplishment of some common task they forgot their differences and were found presently bowing their knees at a common altar and praising and serving a common Christ. Had these same Christians attempted to achieve intellectual unanimity prior to their coming together for purposes of service they would still be living and working in a state of tragic isolation and separateness. It was because the first century Christians were so busy doing things together that they had neither the time nor the disposition to quarrel among themselves. It has always been so and will ever be so. Working together tends to dwarf the significance of abstractions. That was the logic behind the movement that eventuated in the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work. The movement for organic unity among the churches has been perceptibly advanced simply because the disciples of Christ who gathered at Stockholm were willing to suspend judgment on matters of creed until they had first worked together in an heroic effort to lift this world and the people who live in it Godward.

It is to be remembered however that to achieve cooperation in Christian service is moving only one half the way toward the ultimate objective of an organically united Church. It

is a pity that the ranks of those who believe in unity should be divided as to the relative merits of working together and believing together. We are told on the one hand that only matters of life and work really count and that the Church would do well to concern itself with those aspects of its common life and leave untouched all questions pertaining to faith and order. We are told on the other hand that unless the Church can arrive at agreement in matters of faith and order it is sheer nonsense to attempt an inner-communion fellowship on the basis of life and work. Fortunately for the cause of unity we are not obliged to admit the necessity for making a choice between these two positions. We believe neither position to the exclusion of the other for the simple reason that we believe both to the exclusion of neither. We want the Church to work together and we want the Church to find some basis of agreement in matters of doctrine and sacraments. But we cannot see why it is not the sensible and the highly desirable thing to put these activities in parallel columns and attempt the accomplishment of both at one and the same time.

That is what is now being done. The Conference on Life and Work is being supplemented by the Faith and Order Movement. Young people, as well as others, who are inter-

ested in the problem of Church union should be familiar with these two streams of influence that will presently converge to bring the Churches of Christ throughout the world into peace and fellowship one with the other.

In 1910 the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church appointed a Commission to arrange for "a Conference for the consideration of questions touching Faith and Order, and that all communions throughout the world which confess our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour be asked to unite with us in arranging for and conducting such a Conference." No one imagines for a single minute that the ideal of a united Church referred to in this resolution will be achieved in a single conference. But the process of unifying Christendom in matters of Faith and Order must be begun somewhere, sometime. The 1927 Lausanne Conference represents the first step in a pilgrimage that is to continue for many years. Since 1910 eighty-seven nation wide communions have signified their intention of cooperating in the conference method of the Faith and Order Movement. The Roman Catholic Church has thus far determined to hold itself aloof. We are not disposed to condemn Rome for this decision. We can only pray the more fervently that at some future time these two

great branches of historic Christianity may be led by the grace of God first to kneel down together and then to sit down together around the Conference table. It is gratifying however to know that the Eastern Communions are as much interested in questions of Faith and Order as Life and Work. Their cooperation in both of these reconciling processes is assured.

The "Call to Unity" of the first of these Faith and Order Conferences summons every Christian throughout the world to remember "the New Testament teaching, that the Church should reflect the unity of God; the impulse of the Holy Spirit within the Church and in their own hearts, making towards unity; the purpose of the Lord, that through the Church the non-Christian world should be converted and all human society purified and inspired, a purpose which cannot be fulfilled but by a united Church; and the strength and violence of the antagonistic forces of our day, which cannot be met but by a united Church."

We have seen how the Stockholm Conference brought the Churches together, internationally, for the consideration of such practical issues as the Christianization of our social, political and industrial life. The Faith and Order Movement, on the other hand, deals with such subjects as The Call to Unity, the Church's

Message to the World—the Gospel, The Nature of the Church, The Church's Common Confession of Faith, The Church's Ministry, The Sacraments, The Unity of Christendom and the Place of the different Churches within it.

The leaders of the Faith and Order Movement, with true Christ-like humility, refrain from speaking dogmatically on these controversial matters. That is not the conference method of arriving at common conclusions. The literature issued from time to time by the Faith and Order Secretariat, is for discussion purposes only. The deeply significant subjects to which we have just referred must continually engage the attention of those who would heal the schisms within the Body of Christ. These issues strike at the very heart of the problem of Christian unity. They cannot be ignored. Episcopal churchmen who believe in the peculiar virtue of an episcopally ordained priesthood must be willing to meet, on the basis of spiritual equality, the churchmen and laity of the non-episcopal bodies. Conformists and non-conformists, sacramentalists and evangelicals, must confer together and pray together in a common search for the mind of Christ.

The many communions that have become associated with this Faith and Order adventure, for it is an adventure, have as their dominant

motive the cross examination of their own tenets rather than those of other faiths. There is here no boastful exaltation of any particular communion, but an humble effort to see the merit of each other's interpretation of these much mooted questions. These Faith and Order Conferences are not to be the occasion for the reaffirmation of ancient convictions around which there have grown age long prejudices, but rather the occasion for the discovery of deeper truth that will serve as the starting point for a new and better Church. It would be just as inexcusable for any one communion to enter into this Faith and Order fellowship for the purpose of thanking God that it was not like other communions, as for that publican of yesterday to go up into the temple at Jerusalem to thank God that he was not like other men. There is no place in this search for unity for that pride that vaunteth itself. There is room only for that spirit of humility that will bring to each communion a lively sense of its own shortcomings and the spirit of repentance for its own sins in adding to the confusion and chaos that have for so long a time worked for the breaking asunder of the Church of Christ.

What lasting benefit will accrue to the Church as a result of the 1927 Lausanne Conference

and the Faith and Order Conferences that will be held in future years?

In the first place we shall begin to visualize the possibility of reunion. Christian unity is little more than an abstraction to the multitudes. To many it is an academic question, a concern for scholars, professors, doctors of divinity and church officials. At Lausanne, and elsewhere, this issue will be taken from text-books and professors' dissertations and placed upon the library table and in the thinking of every home where an altar to Christ has been raised. The Universal Church will begin to take shape and form. The churchmen who gather in these forthcoming Conferences will disagree at certain points. That is to be expected. But they will see as never before the awful crime of disunion and this recognition will inspire greater efforts than have yet been made to heal these divisions and insure for the future a nobler Church than that bequeathed to the present by the past.

There will be developed, in the second place, a certain catholicity of mind which is more essential than any other one thing. And with this catholicity of mind and spirit there will come a softening of temper and humility of judgment that will make our present difficulties stepping stones to a mutual understanding.

Each communion has, for centuries, judged the other from a distance, and with but scant knowledge of the faith so glibly denied and the creed so vehemently denounced. Such a practice is un-Christian. We must not be guilty of this offence any longer. At Lausanne, and elsewhere, there will be brought into use a new and better method of understanding the point of view of those with whom we differ. Two minds cannot come into contact without each exercising an influence upon the other. Two spirits in search of the eternal cannot fraternize together without finding in that comradeship some basis of mutual regard. It is inevitable, therefore, that the mere coming together of these churchmen at frequent intervals will result in broader perspectives, more tolerant spirits, and a consecrated catholicity of mind and soul. Within each soul there will be lighted the candle of understanding, and in this glow the disciples of Christ will be led at last into the shining glory of God's everlasting truth where all men are brothers and where the Church is One. God will not permit the Faith and Order Movement to come to naught. He will breathe upon this and similar efforts His own eternal benediction and where His blessing falls there peace abides.

Then, too, this Conference method will exercise upon the Church at large an influence of

great educational value. The story of Lausanne and similar Conferences will be news, "good news" if you please. The messages of these gatherings will be heralded from the housetops. Both the religious and secular press will carry these flaming pronouncements to the ends of the earth. Everywhere there will be felt the vibrant touch of the Infinite as He heals the palsied hands of His own misguided disciples. Men and women will be aroused from their denominational security into a realization that God is moving among them. And sensing this nearness of God, men will arouse themselves as never before to fashion a temple worthy of His presence.

And what is more important, these Faith and Order Conferences will encourage youth to believe that Christ is to be taken seriously and that His prayers and His principles are to take precedence over the findings of human intelligence. That is youth's chief aspiration as far as the Church is concerned, that men will be led to sacrifice their own pet theories and their own inherited convictions and clothe themselves with the mind of Christ. If the leaders of the Church cannot themselves discover the mind of Christ and in that discovery be led to live in peace and harmony among themselves, how then can they expect that those who look to them

for divine guidance shall be able to discover the mind of Christ? That is a question found very often upon the lips of youth. Can the blind lead the blind? Hardly. Youth believes that it is not God's will that His Church should be divided. If it is not God's fault that divisions obtain then it must be man's fault. Youth wants to know if any communion is presumptuous enough to represent itself as being without sin in this particular respect. Youth believes that every person who truly seeks Christ and is found of Him is a member of the Church Universal, whether his adopted name be Methodist, Baptist, Episcopal, Friend, or something else. If, then, youth asks, we are severally members of the Church Universal, why must we be everlastingly burdened with the liabilities of our sectarian divisions? Youth looks to the leadership of the Faith and Order Movement for an answer to that question. Whether much or little progress toward the reunion of Christendom is achieved within the next few years, young people will at least be encouraged to persist in their faith, knowing that their elder comrades have consecrated themselves to the task of breaking down the partitions that now divide the flock of Christ.

More than anything else, these Faith and Order Conferences will mark a very definite

beginning of the long delayed process of bringing the Churches of Christ into an organic fellowship with one another. We do not get to the top rung of the ladder in a single jump. We take one rung at a time. Neither shall we heal all the divisions that now exist within the Church by a single diagnosis, nor with a single treatment. We shall never get to the end of the road unless we take the first step. There are many devout people who really long for the unity of the Church but the way to be traveled looks so dark and forbidding that they prefer the sheltered security of their own communion, rather than to venture out upon the trail at the end of which Christ's re-united Church will most certainly be found.

Christ does not ask us to go all the way at once. He asks us only to take the first step. And after we have taken that we shall have faith and light sufficient to take the second, and then the third, and so on, until we have found Him who is the shepherd of God's flock. That step may be feeble, it may be halting, but thank God it will be a step. There will be rejoicing in heaven as well as on earth when that step is taken. God has been waiting and the saints have been praying for that first step for many hundreds of years. The second step will come more quickly. The third step will follow even

more rapidly, until presently we shall find ourselves running in our anxiety to wipe out the shame of a divided Church. The first of these Conferences on Christian unity will be without the power to legislate, or adopt resolutions of a binding character. Let us hope that the next Conference will be more official, and the next after that still more so, until we shall have a Conference in which the participating communions shall grant to their delegates larger and more official prerogatives. Rome, as has been indicated, refrains from participating at least in the earlier stages of this unification program. She may continue to absent herself for some time to come, but she will some day occupy the place reserved for her. There will have been developed in the intervening years such a reconciling influence and such a healing power that the chasm that now exists between Rome and the rest of the world will have been bridged and over it there will travel the emissaries of the Cross on their way to an ecumenical Conference where in deeds of golden splendor there will be laid the foundations of that Church whose builder and maker is God.

Chapter 9

CHRISTIAN UNITY—YOUTH'S OPPORTUNITY

Youth, eager for the reunion of Christendom, has every reason to be encouraged by the story of the past. The movement for an interdenominational and organic fellowship among the Churches has been moving steadily forward in our own and other countries. We have been reviewing some of the more outstanding phases of this new Church which is in the making. As young people we have been made the beneficiaries of the pioneering daring of our elders. While we were yet children and before the thought of a united Church had dawned upon our minds these far visioned men of yesterday, few in number perhaps but triumphant in spirit, were reminding their brethren of the New Testament conception of the Church universal, and then and there began to labor for its achievement. Theirs was a difficult task, but they persisted. These men were sensible. They did not attempt the impossible. They began at the beginning. That in itself is a most difficult thing to do. It is always more thrilling to work

on the superstructure than on the foundation. Fortunately for the cause to which these men had given themselves they were contented to start with small things. Then the miracle of God's leaven began to work. Great achievements grew out of humble beginnings and in recent years we have witnessed an extraordinary and unprecedented interest in the building of that One Church whose Head is Christ.

As young people we have entered into the labor of these, our benefactors. We have received from their hands a task that is only partially finished. Ours is the duty of "carrying on" so that we in turn may place in the hands of those who shall come after us a more nearly completed task. The youth of today are eager and ready to pursue this vision of a united Church. They are greater in number than their fathers, and just as consecrated to Him through whom the final victory is to be achieved. They have the faith of their fathers and more. They are no less daring, no less persistent, no less determined. If their fathers wrought nobly they will achieve still more nobly. Where their fathers failed they will succeed. The past has witnessed the beginning of this great adventure, this quest for an undivided Christian fellowship. The present is still reaching out for a Church that will truly represent the body of

Christ. What of the future? The answer to that question rests with the youth of America and of the world.

The first step which youth must take if it would complete the building of this Church universal is to inform itself. It is doubtful if the enthusiasm of youth on any great moral question is matched by a mind that is sufficiently well informed. Youth has given ample evidence of its concern for and interest in the movement for Christian unity. More than any previous generation the young people of today have voiced their hopes and raised their prayers for the return of the Church to that first century Oneness in Christ. Young people must now come to the place where they are willing seriously to grapple with the intellectual aspects of this issue. Some studying must be done. Some midnight oil must be burned. The most convincing text-book on the subject of Christian unity and one with which our young people must become increasingly familiar, if they would prove effective in this campaign, is the New Testament. Let every youthful disciple of Christ take his New Testament to some quiet garden spot or mountain top and read again and yet again the prayer of Christ contained in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel of John. No less than four times in that single prayer the

Master lifted up His soul to God, "that they all may be one." Conscious as He was that He was soon to leave His earthly friends He prayed that they might be gathered together into a fellowship of spiritual unity that would endure forever. He went to His cross believing that His followers would keep the faith. When, after some months, it began to appear that divisions would make void the prayer of Christ we find Saint Paul pleading with those early Christians to avoid the distractions of disunion. Saint Paul tells the Ephesians that the Church is Christ's Body. There is only one body and there can be only one Church. It is just as sinful, Saint Paul argues, for men to divide the Church as it would have been for His earlier disciples to have broken His body. To rend the Church asunder is to crucify Christ afresh. How desperately Saint Paul fought the proposal to divide the Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ. To him such a proposition was unthinkable. It would do violence to the body of the Christ he so dearly loved. It would annul in a large measure the sacrifice of God's Son upon the cross. He would not think of it. Christian unity was to him the very essence of the religion of Jesus. To disrupt that unity was to betray Christ. Are we surprised therefore to find Saint Paul pleading with his comrades to

keep inviolate their Oneness in Christ? His soul filled with unspeakable anguish, he writes to one of his congregations: "I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." And again "For as the body is one and hath many members, but all the members of the body, many though they be, are one body, so also is the Christ, for by one Spirit have we all been baptized into one body."

The New Testament saints of the Church refused to recognize as valid any division that would destroy their sense of unity in Christ. Even the threat of such a division was regarded by these early disciples as a major insult to the memory of their resurrected Redeemer. When our young people shall become imbued with the spirit of Christ and are fortified by the logic of the New Testament from beginning to end, then they will be able to suffer the criticism of friends and the ridicule of enemies. The thing for which we strive as young people is not that the plans of men for their Church may be fulfilled but that the prayers of Christ for His Church may be answered. That is the first lesson to be learned by the youth of the world, that in their labors for a united Church they are following in the train of their Lord and Master.

If we know the will of God for His Church and refuse to be guided by it we are slackers, but the youth to whom this volume is addressed are not to be included in that category.

When once we have become familiar with the New Testament basis for Church union it will then devolve upon us to become intelligently informed regarding all those agencies and efforts that have for their primary concern the return of Christendom to that inner and outer unity that was so gloriously a part of the first century organization of believers. The young people who are going to make the church history of their own day will be those who will study the current life of the Church upon the background of the centuries that have intervened between Christ's day and our own. History is not made by any accidental process. It is the sequence of events determined by men who know what they are doing and why they are doing it.

The movement for Christian unity is in need right now of a vast army of young men and women who will inform themselves of the principles and methods of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, of the International Council of Religious Education, of the Council of Church Boards of Education, of the International Missionary Council, of the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work,

and of those other bodies that are working for an organic fellowship among the churches, such as the World Conference on Faith and Order. Any one of these organizations, and others that might be mentioned, stand ready to furnish their youthful inquirers with a substantial body of literature that will enable these same young people intelligently and constructively to relate themselves to these agencies for the accomplishment of that noble purpose to which they have set themselves. On the library shelves of every young man and woman who is giving any serious thought to the Church of today there should be found the Year-Books and periodicals of the organizations referred to in the previous chapters. On these same shelves there should be room for some well chosen volumes of recent issue relating to Christian unity. What about the creeds? What about the ministry? What about the nature of the Church? What about the sacraments? Before young people can expect to be of any real and lasting service to the reunion of the Churches they must have at least a reading knowledge of these essential factors.

That is what we mean by being informed. Not that we must possess a technical knowledge of the philosophical implications of all those vast systems of theology that have been built up through the ages, nor that we must know in

the minutest detail the ramifications of every interdenominational organization that is now in the field, but that we shall know something of the more conspicuous achievements of these several agencies that are already functioning so splendidly for a united Church. Many of the youthful enthusiasts who attended the Evanston Interdenominational Student Conference betrayed their lack of information on more than one occasion by calling upon the Church to team together for the doing of certain things when as a matter of fact the things for which these young people asked had been undertaken, at least many of them, by the Churches in their corporate capacity five, ten, fifteen and twenty years ago. It is to be hoped that before another interdenominational student conference is held a serious effort will be made to lay the basis for a more appreciative and sympathetic understanding of what has already been done in the name and for the sake of a closer fellowship among the Churches. It is not alone the duty of youth to seek this information. It is likewise the responsibility of the officials and the executives of these interdenominational organizations to see to it that this much needed information is placed within reaching distance of these young people. Ministers, too, could preach more frequently than they do on the sub-

ject of Christian unity. These same men could add to this growing body of knowledge by giving their support and that of their congregations to the development of city and state councils of churches, and by placing in their church calendars and other parish publications a series of news items on the activities of these interdenominational agencies.

Coming now to those very definite projects which it is the privilege of youth to undertake for the promotion of Church union we mention first the possible healing of the schisms that now exist within the denominations themselves. We are sometimes reminded that it will be time enough to discuss the merging of denominational bodies when once we have succeeded in bringing peace within the family life of each denominational group. There is a sprinkling of both truth and fiction in that contention. But for the sake of what truth there is involved young people should look to that situation as an opportunity to be seized in their efforts to live up to the New Testament ideal of the Christian Church. A glance at any compilation of religious statistics will reveal how tragically divided are most of the denominations with which we are familiar. Do we, as young people, approve of those sectional divisions within our own denominational family? If not, then

let us move forward to the correction of this condition.

Take for example the major divisions within certain denominational bodies that were created prior to or during the days of the Civil War. The issues which were then responsible for those divisions are now dead and can never be revived. Why then is it not possible for us to say grace again around the family table? Most young people believe that such a thing is possible, and more than that, they are determined that this happy condition shall soon prevail. A very practical thing to do in this connection would be for the young people of every denomination where there exists a condition of internal division, to make the possible healing of that division the subject for debate in their own local church societies, district, state and national conventions, and on every other occasion where men and women could be depended on to give serious attention to such a discussion. This debate might also be continued through the columns of that section of the religious press reserved for the problems of youth. In this way many denominational groups could be brought to a re-examination of the historic causes of their own disruption and re-appraisal of the significance of these causes in the light of present day conditions. If they were agreed

that these divisions did not represent the mind of Christ for their own denominational body these young people might, in whatever way might be acceptable to their own officiary, respectfully memorialize the legislative assemblies and conventions of their own Church, to bring such divisions to an end.

Surely there would be nothing presumptuous in such action. If these schisms within the denominations are ever to be healed a beginning must some day be made. Will there ever be a more propitious time in which to make that start than today? We think not. At least the young people of one of our largest and most influential denominations have given a clear indication of their mind with respect to the procedure suggested above. A plan for the unification of the Northern and Southern branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church was recently voted upon by the members of the Annual Conferences of these two bodies. The writer is a member of the New England Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church and voted, together with an overwhelming majority of his clerical and lay associates, for the adoption of the proposed plan of unification. This proposal was validated by a sufficient number of Conferences in the North. It seemed for a time that these two great branches of Methodism were

to be re-united. But the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was not quite ready to give its assent. Not enough affirmative votes were received in the Annual Conferences of that body to insure the adoption of the unification proposal. Then the young people of that great denomination spoke. In a Conference held at Memphis during the Christmas holidays of 1925 and attended by five thousand of their own number these young people of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with scarcely a dissenting voice, implored their own adult leaders to "carry on" in an effort to find some basis of union between their own Church and their sister denomination in the North. The young people in December, 1925, voted for unification. Their fathers, in May, 1926, in General Conference assembled, voted against unification. Age was the victor yesterday but youth will be the victor tomorrow. Cannot we have in every communion a similar stirring of youth in the interest of their own denominational solidarity? Let the start be made today!

We suggest, in the next place, that in those cities where there may be found a sufficient number of interdenominationally minded young people there be organized, under the auspices of the local Council of Churches, Councils or Commissions of Young People. These Councils of

Young People would bring the local chapters of the Christian Endeavor, the Baptist Young People's Union, the Epworth League, the Luther League and other young people's organizations into a more effective working relation with each other, in much the same way that the local churches are brought together within the local Council of Churches. It is entirely likely that we shall witness in the next ten years a rapid growth in this particular phase of the interdenominational program. There is no doubt but that our young people are growing a bit restive under the pressure of the strictly sectarian appeal. They want to enlist in a cause greater than the advancement of their own group. They want to mingle more frequently for religious purposes with those young people with whom they rub shoulders during the week. They go to school together, they walk the streets together, they play in their sports together, they work in the shop together, and they want to worship together. What is more natural? These interdenominational Councils of Young People give them the opportunity they long for to manifest their interest in religion in a broad and comprehensive manner for the good of the whole community.

There are a number of benefits to be derived from this closer affiliation of our church youth.

Thus organized they could breathe new life into the federation movement itself. They could aid in the establishment and maintenance of schools of religious education. They could strengthen the forces that make for civic righteousness and aid in the enforcement of law. They could sponsor mass meetings of young people for the discussion of political, social and religious questions. If we could thus harness the idealism of youth their influence on the current issues of our day would be wholly for the good. Religion itself would come to be interpreted by youth in terms of a living reality. No longer would they feel that faith in God was an inherited something to be out-grown. Sensing the thrill of an interdenominational comradeship our youth would bring their lives to the altars of the Church and their labors to the service of their fellow-men. Are young people today indifferent to the Church and to the claims of religion? It may be that they are. It may also be that this indifference is to be attributed not so much to the young people themselves as to those pastors and church officials who have not yet sensed the desire of youth to be concerned with big issues and with the stirring appeal of a crusading challenge. One would be safe in predicting that if our young people were once given the opportunity

to manifest their interest in religion irrespective of creedal differences they would surprise their elders by the eagerness of their response. The formation in every community of Councils or Commissions of Young People would most certainly result in a revival of religion among the youth of our land.

Let the young people themselves take the initiative with regard to this matter. Let them petition their pastors and the officers of their own local Council of Churches for the organization of an interdenominational Council of Young People. Where no such Council of Churches exists let the young people, in advance of their elders, organize such a Council, thereby giving to their more halting associates an indication of what youth can do in the name of religion and for a better and more efficient Church.

In college centers, too, the time is ripe for a genuine coming together of the various young people's societies. Such a movement is very definitely under way. It is a common thing now to find these young people meeting together in an interdenominational fellowship for the discussion of themes that are directly related to their campus life. The lesson topics furnished them by their own denominational headquarters are being discarded, and subjects more

germane to their own immediate experience are being substituted. Right here it needs to be said that the literature for young people now forthcoming from the publishing houses of the various denominations is wholly inadequate for the needs of college students. Knowing this to be true these young people are taking counsel among themselves in the preparation of a program of religious worship and religious education that is more in keeping with their religious and intellectual needs. Religious projects of a very definite nature are being sponsored by these united groups of young people. Racial, industrial and international issues are being discussed and the conclusions reached are being made the basis for social action. Courses on the interdenominational movement, similar to the one being offered by the Wesley Foundation at the University of California, are being introduced as a basis of discussion, and in this way students are becoming familiar with the technique of church cooperation. In certain colleges the young people are arranging for their own services of religious worship. Preachers are brought to the campus who are able to lay before their hearers in a manly fashion the strenuous labors to which they are summoned as disciples of Christ. This religious activity on the part of our college-trained young peo-

ple is indicative of a yearning for a largeness of religious experience that has not always been attainable through an appeal to sectarian motives.

We suggest, also, as another project for youth in the further development of this broader and more tolerant view of the religious life and this more comprehensive conception of the Church, the holding of a conference of Protestant and Roman Catholic young people. This conference would be called not for the purpose of making all sorts of foolish and impossible demands upon the responsible heads of these two great branches of the Christian Church but for the cultivation of a deeper sense of brotherliness between the youth of these religious bodies. This suggestion will almost certainly offend those Protestants and Roman Catholics who will persist in believing that a state of eternal enmity has been predestined by God to exist between them. But no offense is intended. There lies behind this suggestion the hope that between these two groups of young people there may be developed such a mutual regard for one another's religion that in the future Roman Catholic youth will no longer think of Protestant youth as renegades and Protestant youth will no longer believe that Roman Catholic youth are plotting for the

overthrow of the government. It is time that these ancient myths were exploded. It is time also to discontinue the practice of sitting in judgment on another man's religion simply because his faith does not coincide with our own. There will be Protestants and Roman Catholics in the United States just as long as these two Churches maintain their separate existence. It is obvious that neither Roman Catholics nor Protestants are going to kill each other off, notwithstanding the ranting of those bigots on either side who preach occasionally the gospel of a religious war. We are going to live together, Protestants and Roman Catholics. We are going to hold public office together, teach in the public schools together, be patriots together and together live for the country and the church that we love. Is there any good reason why we cannot do these things together without each looking upon the other with suspicion? Are we destined always to have the Roman Catholic and the Protestant pass by on opposite sides of the street? God forbid. Nothing more salutary to the religious life in America could take place than to have the young people of these two great faiths sit down together, not to adopt resolutions but informally to confess their interdependence and their confidence in each other's good intentions and honest motives. Let the

Protestant youth of America invite their Roman Catholic comrades to share with them an inter-religious conference of common devotion to a common Christ.

In addition we declare that the time is propitious for the convening of a World Congress of Christian Youth. As a matter of fact this project has already received the favorable consideration of the Evanston Continuation Committee. Plans are already under way for the coming together of this Congress during the summer of 1928 or 1929. It is proposed that representatives of the Christian youth of the world shall meet together for ten days or two weeks, possibly in the United States, and having experienced a new Pentecost of religious devotion dedicate themselves to the accomplishment of a united Church. Commissions are now being appointed to survey the religious situation from the eyes of youth and these reports will then be submitted for discussion purposes to the plenary sessions of the World Congress. All the activities of the Church—missionary, educational, social and humanitarian—will there be reviewed and findings will be adopted expressive of youth's appraisal of this varied ministry. This congress, when once held, will become the starting point of youth's quest for the ideal Church, the Church whose Head is Christ and

at whose altar there burns the flame of the living and eternal God.

In view of the oft-expressed desire of youth for an interdenominational fellowship would it not be well for the secretaries and officers of our various young people's organizations to meet together in a conference where this whole subject could be debated on its merits and without regard to sectarian interests? To this conference there could be invited inter-church student pastors, and the executives of every interdenominational agency whose program impinges on the life of youth. A select group of students could be chosen to represent the youth of academic circles. Delegates could also be named who would represent the Council of Young People's Movement in the non-academic field. Such a conference purely for study purposes could not but result in a better understanding among all those who are responsible for the ministry to youth.

One of the first items on the agenda of such a conference would be a discussion of the possible unification of young people's societies. Should the Christian Endeavor, the Baptist Young People's Union, the Epworth League, the Luther League and other young people's societies be brought together under the administrative and executive direction of a single

organization? This question has been debated before but not in recent years, nor with the present day interest of young people in Church union to give pertinency to such a discussion. This issue has been raised within recent months and it will not down until it has been settled right. If it could be shown that the unification of these societies would result in a strengthened Church, in a more virile religion and in an improved social order, then there would remain only the duty of effecting such a unification. Organizations are only means to an end. Young People's Societies do not exist for their own glorification but for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. Has the time come for a general merging of these societies into an inter-church movement of youth? The answer to that question must be determined not by the exigencies of any particular circumstance nor by the desire for survival on the part of any one organization, but by the larger interest of the resulting influence on the growth of the Kingdom of God.

As young people we are not so much interested in the preservation of organization as we are in the evangelization of the world for Christ. If these young people's societies as now organized are contributing the maximum of benefit to the spread of the gospel then they

must be continued. If the reverse is true they must be merged into something bigger and better. Such a conference as we propose would throw much valuable light on the issues involved in this question. It must be remembered that young people cannot expect that those who have given their very lives for the improvement and development of the denominational societies will be ready at a moment's notice to sign the warrant for the dissolution of these organizations. There is also this thing to be thought of, that certain of these organizations do not of themselves possess the legislative power that would be required for the consummation of a merging process. But notwithstanding these considerations the time has come for a fresh discussion of this question. We have no desire to give up what we have until we have something better, neither do we desire that what we have shall blind us to the thing that we ought to do. It may be that out of such a conference there might emerge a proposal for the closer affiliation of these societies on an interdenominational basis, without making necessary the organic merging of these organizations. Something in the nature of a National Inter-Church Council of Young People might be evolved that would act as a clearing house and administrative center for the denominational societies constit-

uent to it. Under such an arrangement the young people's societies as they are now organized would continue to function but with the very definite advantage of having their activities correlated to a purpose and a program that was distinctly interdenominational.

This conference of young people's workers might also consider the shaping of a policy of cooperation between these young people's societies and such organizations as the Missionary Education Movement and the International Council of Religious Education, with the thought in mind of coordinating the various denominational institutes and assemblies of youth with those of an interdenominational character. We rejoice at the large number of institutes for young people that have sprung up within recent years. The writer has had the privilege of serving on the faculty of a number of these denominational summer schools for the training of Christian leaders. He has also been identified with a number of interdenominational conferences of young people such as those sponsored by the Missionary Education Movement and the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions. We believe that there is room in our religious life for both the denominational institute and the interdenominational conference. If either of these movements, worthy

enough in itself, were to strip the other of its vigor and vitality, the resulting situation would be deplorable. Such a condition will not eventuate if a carefully worked out policy of co-ordinating these various summer conferences of youth can be adopted by the mutual consent of all the parties concerned. It might be possible to perfect some kind of an arrangement in which the denominational institute would serve as the undergraduate training center for the strengthening of the interdenominational conference. In that way our young people would be informed not only of the needs of their own denominational group, but they would, in addition, get a clearer vision of their duties as members of the Church Universal.

The adult element of our religious life can be of further service to youth and the Church by qualifying men to undertake these larger interdenominational responsibilities. We need highly trained men and women to assume the executive leadership of our local and state councils of churches. This is not the work for an amateur. To successfully promote a church federation program requires a professional preparation of a highly specialized character. The experimental stage of interdenominational cooperation within state and city areas has been passed. In some fifty cities throughout the

country, and in four States, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Ohio and California, there are employed executive secretaries of Councils of Churches. For many years now these secretaries have busied themselves in the pioneer work of developing a technique for their particular task. They have labored with the highly technical problems of comity. They have, with varying degrees of success, devised ways and means for the financing of a church federation program. They have perfected a science of approach to the industrial, social, religious and educational groups within their respective areas of responsibility. Many of these secretaries are able administrators. Others are experts in the field of religious education. Still others are peculiarly adapted to the making of community surveys and mapping out a program of strategy for the churches within a given area. There are not a few secretaries with a known and demonstrated ability along all of these lines. The experiences of these men should now be brought together in a text-book form and made the basis for a study course in our theological seminaries.

The secretaryship of Councils of Churches should now be recognized as one of the many phases of the Christian ministry and candidates for such work have every right to expect that

the theological seminaries to which they go for graduate study shall prepare them in a scientific way for this particular service. Life-work secretaries of religious organizations doing work on a college campus should direct the attention of ministerial students to this newer profession of the church federation secretaryship. The fields are ripe unto the harvest. Many City Councils of Churches are limping along with part time secretaries or with a purely voluntary leadership, and in each instance this federation work could be made to prosper if there were only a sufficient number of adequately trained men to assume the executive responsibilities involved. And these men stand ready to answer the call if it is presented to them in a stirring, challenging fashion. The writer has very often enjoyed the opportunity of presenting the church federation secretaryship as a possible investment of one's life service and on every occasion he has found students alert and eager to prepare themselves for this particular branch of the Christian ministry. Candidates for church federation work can and will be secured when life-work secretaries, college presidents and professors, student pastors and denominational leaders feel it to be a part of their task to include this phase of church work in every appeal for ministerial recruits.

We affirm once again that the movement for Church union has clearly passed the preliminary stage. With the 1927 World Conference on Faith and Order in the offing, and with the very significant results of the recently adjourned Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work being widely and beneficently made known throughout Christendom, it becomes immediately obvious that the time has come when all denominations and communions must, in a more serious and official manner, concern themselves with the future expansion of this ever developing Universal Church of Christ. To this end chairs on Christian Unity should be established in our theological seminaries. The inter-seminary movement that is now in progress among theological students would seem to indicate that the time had arrived for the introduction of courses on Christian unity in all institutions of learning where candidates for the ministry are being trained. Such a course has already been organized in the Pacific School of Religion at Berkeley, California. Only in that way will students have a sufficient knowledge of the methods and principles involved in the program for Christian unity. This course might well include the following items of study: an inquiry into the historical causes of ecclesiastical divisions; an

appraisal of the relative merits of the episcopal and congregational forms of church government; various interpretations of orders and sacraments and the hindrances to organic church unity that are thereby created; the progress of church federation in America and throughout the world; and finally, an historical survey of the progress already achieved in the field of organic church unity. Three hours a week through an academic year, with some well chosen collateral reading, would give to our ministerial students a working knowledge of the ways and means through which church union is to be brought about. Without such knowledge it is difficult to see how we are to secure the trained leadership which the present situation requires. If those men and women who have the means and the vision to endow chairs on Christian unity in our theological seminaries would only follow the impulse they could measurably advance within their own life time the merging of their denominational life into a common Christian fellowship. The establishment of such courses in every theological seminary would be followed within a single generation by an amazing advance along every line of the interchurch movement. In those seminaries where the offering of such courses might prove to be a difficult if not an impossible

thing, then at least a series of lectures on Christian unity might be given from the chapel platform during each academic year.

Then, too, there is a distinct need in our theological seminaries for a course of study that will qualify men to discharge successfully the challenging responsibilities of the inter-church student pastorate on the college campus. We have already referred to the remarkable development of this very significant phase of the Christian ministry. The Church has never, as a matter of fact, scientifically instructed its clergy in the principles and methods of student evangelism. Our young people in academic circles are now asking for an inter-church student pastorate. College administrators, particularly those in our publicly taxed institutions of learning, are likewise calling upon the Church to furnish their student constituencies with a unified campus program that will be constructively interdenominational. The denominational Boards of Education are responding in a magnificent fashion to this most recent requirement in their common campus responsibilities. It remains for the theological seminaries to furnish the trained leadership for this highly important task. Our seminaries may not now be in a position to enlarge their teaching force so as to provide for the additional courses here

suggested. We predict, however, that in the very near future our more advanced theological seminaries will be offering seminars and lecture courses on the training of the church federation secretaryship, the past, present and possible future of the movement for cooperative and organic church unity, and the principles and methods of the inter-church student pastorate. The further development of our seminaries will very likely be along these general lines.

Youth believes that the religious press could be of immense service in the promotion of Christian unity, without in the least compromising its own denominational responsibilities. Manifestly, if a church paper is to be the organ of a particular denomination, it must be that. But it can be more than that. It can become a journal of general information on the progress of Christianity throughout the world irrespective of any denominational emphasis. It is possible, too, that if our religious weeklies were to concern themselves a little less with the pushing out of denominational frontiers and a little more with the expansion of Christ's Kingdom in all parts of the world they might be able to secure a paying constituency. The writer ventures the guess that if our religious editors were to adopt the policy of printing each week a page

of brilliantly written news on the current phases of our interdenominational life that particular page would be thumbed quite as much, if not more, than any other. And all the while the deeper interests of each denomination would be all the better served by the enriching process that always attends the presentation of the whole truth rather than with a fragment thereof. Some of our religious weeklies are already filling their columns with a very liberal and inspiring account of our present day cooperative Christianity. May their numbers increase until every religious weekly in the United States shall take pride in the fairness with which it handles news of an interdenominational character.

The future of religious journalism in this country is hanging in the balance. It may be that other magazines are crowding our religious weeklies from the library table of the average American home for the simple reason that the appeal of the average denominational journal has been too largely confined to the fostering of a sectarianism that has all but passed out of the life of the average layman. One thing is certain, if our religious weeklies could be made to live for something bigger and broader than their own ecclesiastical interests, their problems of circulation would be greatly simplified. The salvaging of the religious press

is a problem for the "best minds" of every denomination. In whatever way that particular problem is solved it remains true that the inter-denominational movement is in need of a more vigorously constructive journal of opinion than is now available.

We do not lack for negative minded periodicals of religion that go about seeking whom they may devour. We will never achieve our objective of Christian unity by setting journalistic bloodhounds upon the trail of our denominational shortcomings. We know what is wrong with our sectarian life. What we need in this hour is an editorial voice that will not only call us to repentance for our sins but that will summon us in the spirit of Christian humility and in the name of a common Christ to walk hand in hand with each other and with God. It does not require a very able type of editorial mind to point out the flaws that are so obviously a part of our religious practices. The axe is a necessary implement of progress but it is not the only one. We need today a journal that is absolutely unbiased with regard to denominationalism and that will dedicate itself to the fine art of building up instead of tearing down. This journal must be one both of opinion and of information. Its editorial policy must be Christ's prayer for the unity of the

Church. Its news columns must be devoted to a sane and adequate presentation of the many ways in which that prayer for unity is being answered, both in America and throughout the world. A journal of this kind, well written and with a prophetic daring in its message, would appeal to a vast throng of people who would both read and support it. A closer coordination of all the organizations now carrying on interdenominational work and a pooling together of all the funds now available for the promotional phases of this interdenominational program, might, with the aid of a modest endowment created for such a purpose, make possible the publication of such a journal of religion.

What a boon it would be to Christianity the world over if there could come into our homes every week a periodical of religion that would exalt Christ and Christ alone; that would preach the gospel of reconciliation and human brotherhood; that would summon Christians everywhere to combat the hatreds of the world with the undying and succeeding love of an infinite and compassionate God; that would focus the indignation of righteous people upon the social sins of our day until every last one of those vulgarities was stripped of its power and rendered impotent. It is possible to pro-

duce such a religious journal but it can only be done upon an interdenominational basis. It is to be hoped that from among the many thousands of young people who are now turning their faces toward a united church there may be found the editorial leadership for this great enterprise.

There is also need for an interdenominational journal that would circulate among college students. These students, many of them, are hungering and thirsting after a knowledge of what the church proposes to do, in its collective capacity, about rescuing the human race from the vices and vagaries of our modern life. But little information upon this point ever reaches them. Very few of these students ever read their own denominational periodicals and if they did they would glean from such reading but very little information of those interests that lie so close to their thinking. No more strategic move could be taken by the Christian forces of America than to publish and put into circulation among the college youth of America a weekly or monthly periodical of religion that would furnish these young men and women with an interpretation of the Church in action. Such a journal would raise the moral standard of every state and denominational college and university and would add immeasurably to the

prestige and influence of the Church in the lives of these young people. If we are to have inter-church student pastorates, then why not an inter-church journal of religion? It would be far better strategy for the Christian Church to scold a little less about the atheism of college professors and concern itself with the circulation among college students of a body of literature adapted to their social interpretation of life and their interdenominational interest in religion. Here is an opportunity for the Church to stimulate the thinking and deepen the loyalty of the present generation of students for the things of God and eternity.

Finally, there is need, so youth believes, for the accomplishment of a closer integration of the many interdenominational organizations to which reference has been made in preceding pages. The very logic of the interdenominational movement would seem to make this clear. The simplification of administration processes, the speeding of action, the saving of overhead expenses, the voicing of a common mind and the strengthening of a common purpose have made necessary the inter-church movement of today. Interdenominational organizations of one kind or another have been created for the purpose of guaranteeing to the Church that added efficiency which is made possible through coopera-

tion. Would not the same tendency seem to argue against the multiplication of interdenominational organizations? We think so. There must be no competition, no lack of understanding, no working at cross purposes between those bodies which have been set up by the Church at large to promote the effectiveness of the cooperative movement. Such a condition, were it ever to obtain, would prove fatal to the very causes to which these agencies are now giving themselves with such splendid devotion. Interdenominational organizations were created for the specific purpose of avoiding the overlapping of denominational interests and activities and now to fall themselves a victim of that same condition would be most unfortunate. The interdenominational movement, to be consistent with itself, must move forward to a larger merging of its own organizational activities. Negotiations are already under way for the closer affiliation of the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions with the Federal Council of Churches. It is to be hoped that this merging process may be continued until we shall achieve a unified but democratically controlled movement of interdenominational endeavor.

One way of approaching the solution of this problem would be to call together for conference

purposes a large number of our denominational and interdenominational leaders and executives. The advisability of effecting an organizational unity among the several interdenominational bodies could there be discussed and commissions appointed to scientifically inquire into the pros and cons of the many complex issues that would be involved. The writer is not unfamiliar with the numerous dangers that would have to be counteracted were such a merging process to be set into motion. Centralization of administrative and executive authority may be attended with evils and hindrances far greater than those which obtain at the present time. But under a wise and consecrated leadership these dangers and difficulties could and would be avoided. A more scientific division of inter-church responsibility with regard to the missionary, educational and social aspects of our common church life would result from the accomplishment of this consolidation. Money would be saved, time and energy conserved and large victories for Christ and His Church would be won through the strategy of an allied command. The problems of local organization within the city and state would be greatly simplified. This is of tremendous importance. With unity among the national bodies doing interdenominational work an accomplished fact it would be a much

easier task to interpret and carry into effect the church federation program locally. And more than that, the interdenominational movement in America and throughout the world would be haloed with a new significance were we to achieve in our own country and elsewhere a closer union of the forces that are now operating in behalf of a cooperative Christianity.

Many of our younger churchmen believe that the future development of the interdenominational movement will be along the lines here suggested: a deeper comprehension among the young people themselves of the influences that are now at work both for the furtherance of church cooperation and organic union; the healing of denominational divisions as the first step in the more ambitious program of achieving the reunion of Christendom; the organization of a vast number of Young People's Commissions under the auspices of City and State Councils of Churches; the unifying of the administrative and program making agencies of the various Young People's Societies; the establishment of chairs on Christian Unity in theological seminaries and the qualifying of trained executives for the church federation secretaryship; the publication of an interdenominational journal of religion that will circulate widely throughout the Church at large with a specially prepared

edition for young people, particularly those of college age and experience; the convening from time to time of conferences of Christian youth for the cultivation of a world-wide religious fellowship; and finally, the closer affiliation and possible merging of the interdenominational organizations that are now in the field.

Chapter 10

CONCLUSION

God has laid upon the youth of today the responsibility for bringing into a single fold the scattered sheep of the Good Shepherd. Youth accepts this responsibility not in ignorance of the obstacles to be overcome but with the faith to believe that if a thing ought to be done it can be done. Building a United Church is one of the things that ought to be done. It is God's will and what is God's will is man's duty. Every hour therefore that we delay the coming of church union we surrender to an influence that is foreign to God's purpose for His Church. Can there be any denial of the truth of this? In postponing the consummation of God's will for the unity of His followers we lend ourselves to interests that are wholly human and for that reason alien to the concern of Christ for the Church that was to become the visible representation of His Body to the sons of men. To build then a Church for the worship of God whose love does not admit of sectarian partialities and whose spirit is and ever will be One is the prayer and the purpose of youth.

As young people we must pray for the union of the Church. We must believe in the things wrought by prayer. Human strength will prove insufficient for the sacrifices that will be required if the Church of which we speak is ever to come into being. There rise up before us as we dream of Christian unity the vested interests of each denominational group, the vast outreach of creedal concerns, the selfishness that lies imbedded in every institution made by men, and the deathly inertia of the many who swim with the current and who prefer things as they are, not as they should be. And what power, youth asks, will remove these mountains of obstruction? Nothing but the power of prayer. When human strength is linked through the covenant of prayer with strength divine then all things are possible. If on a given day every priest and bishop and preacher and layman were to join together in a solemn prayer that God's will for His Church might come to pass many of those sectarian difficulties that are so often thought of as insurmountable would vanish as does the morning mist before the rising sun. All unconsciously perhaps we adjust our prayers to the needs of our own sectional and partisan interests. Yes, we pray for the Church everywhere, the Church universal, but do we pray often enough and persistently enough that

God will take our own communion, and that of our neighbor, and weld both together for His glory and for the salvation of men? How long has it been since we prayed such a prayer? Complete church union will never come until the disciples of the Risen Lord have learned that prayer of Christ, "that they all may be one." Here is youth's opportunity. While we are yet young let us lift our faces Godward and pray that strength may be given us to resist unto death every influence that makes for division within the Church. Let us make our interest in church union something more than an academic question. Let us make it the passion of our prayers. Let us pray as did Jacob at Bethel with no thought of surrender until our purpose has been accomplished.

Youth must then live in the spirit of this prayer for Oneness in Christ. Our thinking must not be contaminated with thoughts of religious bigotry. Let us as young people refuse to degrade our soul or insult our intelligence by fostering thoughts of suspicion and distrust toward those sectarian groups which have been set over against our own. Let us purge our mind of those religious and creedal prejudices that have been a part of our mental equipment since the days of our childhood. Let us refuse any longer to believe that we stand in a position

of preferment in the House of our Heavenly Father. Let us refuse likewise to believe that he who lisps a creed different from our own is any less a disciple of Christ than we ourselves are. Let us straighten out all those denominational twists in our thinking that have made it so difficult for us to develop the sympathetic touch and the understanding heart. Let us think interdenominationally.

Having dedicated our prayers and our thoughts to the unifying of Christ's flock how naturally it follows that what was once a hope for church union has become a passion, a passion endowed by God with eternal persistence; a passion that cannot help but succeed for the simple reason that it cannot fail. When this passion has taken possession of our lives, our hearts, our prayers and our thoughts we shall care nothing for the emoluments of denominational distinction, nothing for the titles of ecclesiastical advancement, nothing for the alluring by-paths of sectarian reward. We shall be willing to give up whatever advantages may accrue to us personally through a continuance of the denominational system. Indeed, we shall be willing if need be to endure Franciscan poverty if only Christ may be exalted and His Church brought at last to Oneness in Him. Sheer logic will never heal the divisions that

have so cruelly broken the Body of Christ. Practical necessity may prod us to make many concessions to the interdenominational movement that we might not otherwise have been willing to make. But nothing short of a passion fortified by prayer and sanctified by a life that lives above the clouds of dissension will ever prove sufficient to unify the Church of Christ. If, as young people, we are able to sense even remotely the agony of Christ as He prayed for the Oneness of His disciples, if we can yearn as He yearned, believe as He believed and labor as He labored we shall live to see the day when God shall lift the Church out of the valley of conflict and place it upon the mountain top of peace.

What, then, of the future? The answer is that progress is going to be made and each day will find the Church more and more conscious of its inner unity and increasingly manifesting that unity in life and work, in faith and order. As it was in the days of yesterday, so will it be in the days of tomorrow, youth will persist and achieve. Let those who have grown old and tired in their labor for Christian unity take courage. God has smiled upon their efforts. The dim outline of that Church for which Christ prayed has just begun to appear beyond the horizon. As these pioneering pilgrims of yes-

terday put out to sea may they do it with faith enough to believe that their younger associates will, by virtue of the strength given unto them through Christ, pursue the quest, so that when at last youth and age together approach the harbor of the Great Unseen they may have resting upon their soul the prayers and benediction of a United Church.



Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01023 7552